

THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1843.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INVOCATION AND WORSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, IN THE CHURCHES OF BELGIUM.

THERE is no charge brought against the Church of Rome which its members repel with greater indignation than that of Idolatry, on account of the homage they pay to the blessed virgin, the saints, and martyrs.

—"A grave and most awful charge is laid upon us," says Dr. Wiseman, "in consequence of our belief; we are even denounced as idolators, because we pay a certain reverence, and if you please worship, to the saints of God, and because we honour their outward emblems and representations. Idolators! Know ye, my brethren, the import of this name? That it is the most frightful charge that can be laid to the score of any Christian? For throughout God's word, the crime of idolatry is spoken of as the most heinous, the most detestable in His eyes, even in an individual; what, then, if committed in a mass, by millions of men! . . . Assuredly they know not what they say, who deliberately and directly make this enormous charge: and *they have to answer for misrepresentation—yea, for calumny of the blackest dye*—who hesitate not, again and again, to repeat with heartless earnestness and perseverance, this most odious of accusations, without being fully assured—which they cannot be—in their consciences, and before God, that it really can be proved.

"For, my brethren, what is idolatry? It is the giving to man, or to anything created, that homage, that adoration, and that worship, which God has reserved unto himself; and to substantiate such a charge against us, it must be proved that such honour and worship is alienated by us from God, and given to a creature." *

No candid mind would wantonly repeat an accusation that is met by so solemn and indignant a disclaimer; but still, even this express

* Wiseman's Lectures on the Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church. 1836. Lec. xiii. vol. ii. 12mo. p. 93.

denial, unauthorised as it is, must not be allowed to abate our hostility to a system which renders to "the outward emblems and representations" of the saints, the utmost possible degree of external homage and worship—such only as their devotees could give, had they actually "alienated" their hearts from God, and yielded them with idolatrous devotedness to the creature.

That such is, indeed, the case, has been attested by travellers, not only in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, but also in France and Switzerland, who have supplied innumerable instances of such excessive homage, which came under their own observation.*

In a visit I made to Belgium, in the beginning of last September, I had many opportunities of seeing, in the course of that journey, the devotion of the people to the virgin, it being the eight days' festival to celebrate the nativity of "the mother of God!"

Anxious to witness the manner in which this commemoration was observed, I made it a point to visit every village church, city cathedral, or monastic chapel, in my way; and my impressions, therefore, were not derived from an isolated fact, but from the uniform practice of the clergy and people throughout the Netherlands. In every church or chapel I entered, there was an image of the virgin, dressed for the occasion, and placed near the railings of the altar, or in the centre of the church. In some instances the figure was paltry and poor, like a dressed doll; but in others, it was large and expressive, and attired in costly lace and jewels, with a rich diadem of gems and gold upon its head. Garlands of artificial flowers were prepared by young people to crown the image, and costly plants, orange and lemon trees, myrtles, &c., were brought from the conservatories of the rich, to adorn the churches in honour of the festival. In the church of St. James, at Antwerp, which surpasses, in magnificence, all the churches of Belgium, the image of the Madonna was crowned with a splendid coronet, and a veil of the richest lace, hung from its shoulders, while scores of wax tapers, in massive candlesticks of gold and silver, were blazing around it; the orchestra poured forth the sweetest sounds, and the censers of a crowd of ministering priests breathed forth most fragrant incense. In every place, multitudes of all classes were to be seen bowing with the profoundest homage before the image; and I can never lose the impression which the ecstatic gaze and uplifted arms of several kneeling devotees produced upon my mind.

It may be very true, as Dr. Wiseman says, that a spectator could not know the state of their hearts before God; but as the actions of the body naturally express the feelings of the mind, and as the attitude of worshippers is the natural sign of adoration and worship, so when I

* See Mariolatry; or Facts and Evidences Demonstrating the Worship of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Church of Rome, &c. Second edition. pp. 67—117.

saw their impassioned gaze at the image, their imploring look, and their prostrate persons, I felt that it would be impossible to add to the apparent force or intenseness of their worship, had it been offered to the Lord of all.

The language of the formularies they address to the virgin, is in painful agreement with these acts of their worship. Let the reader judge from the following parody on the Lord's prayer, which is printed on illuminated cards, and sold in the shops at Brussels:—

'A MARIE.

Notre Mère qui êtes aux Cieux.

Notre mère qui êtes aux cieux, ô Marie, que votre nom soit béni à jamais, que votre amour vienne à tous les cœurs, que vos désirs s'accomplissent en la terre comme au ciel ; donnez-nous aujourd'hui la grâce et la miséricorde, donnez-nous le pardon de nos fautes, comme nous l'espérons de votre bonté sans bornes, et ne nous laissez plus succomber à la tentation, mais délivrez-nous du mal. Ainsi soit-il.

The English reader may judge by the following translation:—

TO MARY.

Our Mother who are in Heaven.*

Our mother, who are in heaven, O Mary, blessed be your name for ever ; let your love come to all our hearts, let your desires be accomplished on the earth, as in heaven ; give us this day grace and mercy, give us the pardon of our faults, as we hope from your unbounded goodness, and let us no more sink under temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

But if, in the face of such evidence, we allow the disclaimer of Dr. Wiseman, as to the worship of the virgin, there can be no mistake about the doctrine of her mediation.

The streets of Antwerp were placarded with posting bills, four feet long, announcing the festival. I obtained one of them, and the following translation will be sufficient to show that the word of God, and the mediation of our "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," are quite forgotten, while the testimony of St. Bernard and St. Anthony, and "the example of Pius VII. of blessed memory," are held to be sufficient to authorise a system which virtually supersedes the work of "the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

"Solemn Week's Festival for the members of the society, called 'Christians' Help,' in the parish church of the Holy Apostle St. James, on occasion of the Birth of the Holy Virgin, Maria, the Mother of God.

"With what gratitude have our forefathers, for a long train of centuries, thought on Mary, convinced that the powerful intercession of that God-like mother has always procured for Christians the greatest favours, according to the testimony of St. Bernard, who said, that 'such a thing was never heard of as that any one seeking the help of Mary was rejected.' This was the foundation on which all Christendom reposed amidst persecution, sorrow, and dangers ; and however desperate their circumstances at a distance might appear, still this reliance on Mary has never been disappointed.

* Roman Catholics usually speak of and address the Deity in the second person plural.

"It is unnecessary to recapitulate all the events in which the aid of Mary has been manifested in behalf of Christians; we have all frequently experienced, and, indeed, feel daily still the great power of her who, as St. Augustine observes, has more power with God than other saints. Hence it is that we see Christians, in all their difficulties, flee to her for refuge, according to the example of Pope Pius VII. of blessed memory, who, supplicating Mary during his banishment and imprisonment of more than twenty-eight years, experienced so perceptibly her help, that he instituted in perpetuity this festival, whose celebration we now solemnly hold.

"And, indeed, who can go to Mary, and not have hope of being heard, while St. Anthony assures us 'it is impossible that God should not listen to Mary?' Let us then, believing Christians, revive our confidence, and during this festival of eight days, flee to the holy mother of Jesus, and lay before her our griefs and afflictions, in the assurance that both in our temporal and spiritual necessities we shall be relieved.

"To this end the Divine services in connexion with the above society are arranged as follows:—

"Wednesday, 7th September, will be celebrated at ten o'clock, A.M., a solemn mass, at which the children of the parochial schools will come and present their offerings. At precisely a quarter before five, P.M., the venerable image of the most Holy Mother of God will be taken from the chapel, and carried into the body of the church, during which is to be sung the anthem, Ave Maria Stella, and then the solemn musical performances.

"Thursday, 8th September, the Birthday of the Virgin, at six in the morning, in her chapel, the most holy sacrament of the Altar will be held up for worship, with ringing of the great bell; at half-past eight, the usual parish sermon; at ten o'clock, the Rev. Father Morel, of the Society of Jesus, will preach in French; after which the Venerable J. B. Dierickx, pastor of this parish, will celebrate the Mass with magnificent music. At half-past four in the afternoon, the Very Reverend J. B. Dierickx, above-named pastor, will preach, after which the solemn musical performance, and the grand procession attendant by all the fraternity, will take place in the church.

"Sunday. The most holy sacrament will be exposed for worship at six o'clock, A.M. in the Chapel of our Dear Lady; at half-past eight, the usual parochial sermon; at nine o'clock, the solemn Mass will be celebrated by the Rev. G. de Ridder, sub-pastor and spiritual patron of the above society; at half-past ten the usual sermon; in the afternoon, at half-past four, the Rev. J. Vranckx, sub-pastor of the parish, will preach, and then follows the solemn music.

"The remaining days of this festival, the solemn mass, in honour of our dear Lady, will be celebrated at ten o'clock, and sermons preached at half-past four in the afternoon, &c.

"Thursday, 15th inst., to close this festival, the most holy sacrament will be held up for worship, at six o'clock in the morning, in our dear lady's chapel; at ten, the solemn mass will be sung by the Rev. F. J. Coonen, sub-pastor of this church; afternoon, at five, the sermon by the Rev. J. Moons, sub-pastor of this parish, after which the solemn anthem in magnificent music; and then the venerable image of Mary, the holy mother of God, will be solemnly taken from the middle aisle of the church to the great Chapel.

"Friday, after the festival, a solemn mass of gratitude for all the benefactors of the above fraternity, will be celebrated at half-past six o'clock; at eight, a mass will be read for the deliverance of the souls of the brethren and sisters of the community who have died.

"All to the increasing honour of God and His Holy Mother."

I find, from an "Appeal of the Belgian Evangelical Society," that the citizens of Brussels have recently exhibited their devotion to the virgin in the same spirit which, three centuries ago, led them to inscribe, on the front of the *Broodhuys* in their Grand-Place—*A peste, fame et bello, libera nos Maria pacis.*

It is said that there is, in one of the largest churches in Brussels, a miraculous image of the virgin which has so excited the fanaticism of the poor, that they commenced a subscription to purchase a crown of gold for it, and which they invoke as "the Mother of Mercy." The middle classes imitated the zeal of the poor; and, to aid the enthusiasm, the Queen of the Belgians gave a superb sapphire. The subscription enabled them to employ ninety ounces of pure gold in the crown; (the workmanship of which alone cost £280;) and there are 593 diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and turquoises, besides 377 fine pearls set in it. The crown is lined with gothic lace of gold filagree-work, and its circle bears an inscription, *Mariæ Matri Misericordiæ*, in azure letters; because, as the *Journal de Bruxelles* (May 31st) expressed it, "Mary is Queen of Heaven, by the almighty power of God."

As may be supposed, the ceremony of crowning the image was one of great pomp. The same journal gives the following account of it:—

"The evening before Ascension-day, all that part of the High Street which reaches from the church to the parsonage-house, was planted with firs, on which were hung garlands of evergreens, and red, blue, and white calico. Several triumphal arches were also placed in the streets. Early in the morning an immense crowd gathered around the church. At six o'clock the Cardinal Archbishop celebrated the mass, and during two hours administered the communion.

"The confessors had been engaged until midnight in hearing the confessions of the people. At eight o'clock, the Archbishop of Damietta, Nuncio at Brussels, celebrated mass, and then continued to give the communion; in an adjoining chapel the holy eucharist had been distributed from five o'clock in the morning. Several hundreds of persons, seeing the difficulty of approaching the holy table, went to other churches, to satisfy their devotion. There were three thousand communicants at the chapel alone (the church in which the ceremony took place.) At ten o'clock the rector Magnifique, of the Louvain Catholic University, chanted high mass, at which the Cardinal was present in his pontifical dress, surrounded by his grand vicar, several canons, and a great number of the clergy.

"At two o'clock the procession quitted the parsonage-house for the church, headed and closed by a detachment of the Guides, (the king's body-guard,) their music in front.

"The procession was formed by a deputation of the different brotherhoods of the parish—the council of administration of the church—the community of the brethren of Christian schools—the fathers of the company of Jesus, and of the Congregation of Redemptorists—the curé of the parish and a numerous clergy—the Cardinal-Archbishop and his vicar-general—the rector Magnifique, of the university of Louvain, and several canons.

"More than 500 men of the different regiments in town, were drawn up in line to keep order.

"The crown was borne by eight young ladies dressed in white, accompanied by others carrying flowers and laurels. When they reached the church, it was placed on a rich pedestal at the feet of Mary.

"In the morning, the Curé of the church was informed, that the king had decided on accompanying her majesty the queen, and bringing with him his royal highness the Duke of Brabant. At three o'clock, the royal suite arrived; their majesties were accompanied by the Countess Merode, &c. &c., (here follow the names of their majesties' suite) At the entrance of the church, the Cardinal-Archbishop, at the head of his clergy, complimented the king on his following the example of his august consort, in honouring the grand solemnity with his presence.

"The cardinal began the *Veni Creator*, which was executed by a full orchestra. The Rev. Father Boone addressed the assembly in a short and touching discourse, proving, in a few words, that the crown offered to Mary, was a crown of glory for her, and a crown of joy for the people. The cardinal then blessed the crown, after which, the imposing ceremony of the coronation took place. Preceded by two priests who carried the precious treasure, the cardinal ascended the steps which were raised before the throne of Mary; and when the crown, proof of so much affection and of so many good works and conversions, was placed on the head of the mother of mercy, the eyes of all the assembly were fixed on this good mother, and expressed a feeling of the purest joy and most filial attachment; no pen can describe that moment of enthusiasm. The music of the guides, which had played during the ceremony, now ceased, and that of the college executed a hymn. The cardinal then consecrated to Mary, the king, the queen, their august children, the parish, the capital, and the whole of Belgium; and began the *Magnificat*, which, chanted by a numerous clergy, constrained every heart to the deepest devotion. The affecting ceremony being ended, the cardinal went to the high altar, and gave the triple blessing with the holy sacrament, and then conducted their majesties to the church door. It is impossible for us to describe the enthusiasm of the people when the royal family entered and quitted the church. 'Long live the king!' 'Long live the queen!' 'Long live the Duke of Brabant!' were repeated by more than 30,000 tongues. We are happy to see that it is to honour Mary, the Duke of Brabant appears for the first time publicly in a church. In the evening there was an illumination in the streets through which the procession had passed, and also in different parts of the parish; the poor places vied with the rich in the number of lights. It was impossible for the people to be happier than they were, at seeing the royal family, the nobility and the high clergy associate with them, in a festival which they had begun in such an interesting manner, and which, in establishing their religious principles, has given them a lesson of such high morality."

With such facts and scenes before them, Protestants will not be deterred from calling these scenes idolatrous; which threaten to lead the people of Europe back again to the open blasphemies of the middle ages, when the virgin was installed as a *fourth* person of the Godhead!

Before I conclude, I would express a hope, that devoted Protestants who read these statements, or who may witness these scenes in Belgium, will not be content to deplore them, but will aid, by their prayers and their contributions, that faithful little band of Protestant Christians in Belgium, who, under many difficulties, continue to bear their humble but zealous testimony against these abominations. B.

Subscriptions to the funds of the Belgian Evangelical Society are received by the Rev. Thomas James, 7, Blomfield-street, Finsbury, London.—EDITOR.

ON MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATION FOR PUBLIC PRAYER.

CONGREGATIONAL dissenters are not inferior to any section of the Christian church, in their scriptural intelligence, and in their steadfast adherence to evangelical truth. On these points there is reason for gratitude to God, as well as for a sober confidence in reference to the future ; there is none, however, to justify sectarian gratulation, or to make us presumptuously heedless of the dangers existing around us : for error more frequently spreads like an insidious disease, than gains its conquests on the open field of combat. Should we permit ourselves to utter one trumpet-note of self-praise, its tones of pride may scarcely have died away, before we should discover reasons to clothe ourselves with sackcloth, and to utter bitter lamentations. The aspect of the Christian world, at the present time, might reasonably cause the wise to feel perplexed, the firm to tremble, and the passionless to weep.

While it is satisfactory that our congregations are distinguished by scriptural knowledge, and enlightened principle, we cannot conceal our impression, that they are deficient in devotional fervour and power. Their interest in public worship, is confined too exclusively to the sermon. They come to hear rather than to pray ; and are more correct theologians than devout worshippers. External circumstances are often indicative of the state of the heart ; and we think that the habit of sitting during prayer,—so general in our places of worship,—indicates the absence of deep devotional feeling. Such a practice we consider indecorous and irreverent.* We know it may

* The Editor is happy to say, that his impressions do not accord with those of his friend the writer, that the habit of sitting during prayer is *general* in our places of worship. Still, it must be confessed, that many do, and some, it may be supposed, through a false interpretation of a passage of Scripture. In 1 Chron. xvii. 16, we read that "David the king came and sat before the Lord," and in that posture uttered a most touching prayer to God. "Those unacquainted with Eastern manners," says Mr. Kitto, "are surprised at this. But there is a mode of sitting in the East which is highly respectful, and even reverential. It is that which occurs in the Moslem forms of worship. The person first kneels, and then sits back upon his heels. Attention is also paid to the position of the hands, which they cross, fold, or hide in the opposite sleeves." In the same article he also remarks—"Standing in public prayer is still the practice of the Jews. This posture was adopted from the synagogue by the primitive Christians, and is still maintained by the Oriental churches. This appears, from their monuments, to have been the custom amongst the ancient Persians and Egyptians, although the latter certainly sometimes kneeled before their gods. In the Moslem worship, four of the nine positions are standing ones ; and that posture which is repeated in three out of the four instances, may be pointed out as the proper Oriental posture of reverential standing, with folded hands. It is the posture in which people stand before great men and kings."—*Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, article *Attitudes*, p. 256.

be said, that the spirit of prayer has no necessary connexion with the position of the body. Admitting the doctrine, that its most lowly prostration would not, in itself, constitute spiritual and acceptable worship to be sound; still, earnest devotional affections would dispose the worshipper to adopt the most reverential posture of the body. As a matter of fact, it may be noticed, that the eminently devout persons in a congregation usually stand or kneel; while the majority remain seated. Our blessed Lord, in his approaches to the Father, "kneeled down," and in his agony, "he fell on his face and prayed,"—the depth of his anguish inducing a more profound prostration of the body. His example amounts to an authoritative declaration, that God ought to be worshipped in a becoming posture of the body, as well as with sincerity of mind. To attribute intrinsic efficacy to external form, is a serious error; but to be regardless of it, is to err in the opposite direction: and when it is justified by a zeal for spirituality of worship, the reasoning is as inconclusive as the practical influence is injurious. A studied and ceremonial civility of manner is demanded by good society, as giving grace and propriety to social intercourse; is it not then an irrational anomaly, to banish it from our most sacred approaches to God?

Our conviction that the devotional spirit, among Congregationalists, is below par, does not rest exclusively on this fact. The manner in which they think and speak on the subject; the inferior estimation in which the devotional parts of Divine service are practically held; the absence of impression, of tears, and of joy, in connexion with them, furnish evidence of the fact. Such is not a satisfactory or a healthy state of things; and it may be useful to inquire, what are the causes to which it is attributable? Can we trace it to a want of depth and fervour in the prayers offered by our ministers? has it its source in the spirit and temper of the age? is it chargeable on our distinctive principles and polity? and how far may it arise from any one, or all these causes? We shall confine our remarks to the first of these queries; and wish to be understood, as suggesting inquiry, and not as affirming that such is the case.

That there is a connexion between the prayers offered in public worship, and the devout feelings of the people, cannot be doubted. If not related as cause and effect, the relation is still very intimate. It cannot, therefore, be a vain inquiry, how Congregational ministers may become thoroughly prepared to conduct the devotions of the sanctuary. We reject the use of liturgies, from the conviction that extemporaneous prayer is more adapted to excite spiritual affections, than pre-arranged forms, however beautiful, evangelical, or devotional. In thus relinquishing the aids which holy and able men of other generations have bequeathed to the church, it is incumbent on those who minister at the altar, to give to free prayer the depth and compre-

hensiveness,—the pathos and solemnity,—of which it is susceptible. It is not, *per se*, excellent; it may be cold, barren, formal, and powerless. But it *may* possess a very high degree of excellence, and communicate a spiritual unction, beyond what has been obtained in the exclusive use of liturgical forms. In justification of our practice, we can satisfactorily show, that in the primitive age, free prayer was used in public worship; but we must remember, that apostolic institutions require for their efficacy an apostolic spirit. In maintaining a usage so highly sanctioned, consistency demands, that we sustain that inspiring spirit of devotion, which then gave to extempore prayer its wondrous efficacy.

Are, then, the devotional parts of public worship among us as interesting and effective as they are capable of being made? We think they are not; and that to this fact may be traced the absence of deep-toned piety in so many professors of religion, as well as other evils which afflict our churches. Correct theological opinion alone, never made men apostles in zeal, or martyrs in spirit; and the church most displayed the strength of her principles and her resistless energy, in those times when her public worship was solemn and subduing, and when she felt within her soul, the deep spiritual passion of her suffering Lord. Nor will the Congregational churches fulfil their high destiny, until, as they are distinguished by a scriptural creed, they possess also a thrilling devotion. The claims of the world on them are recognised; but they feel not that "Divine infection" of their Master's spirit, requisite for the great enterprises, the lofty achievements, the moral heroism, and the self-oblivion of the religion of the cross.

Ministerial qualification for public prayer will spring,

I. FROM MENTAL AND MORAL ADAPTATION.

The rarest jewels are found embedded in the earth, having incrustations which conceal their brilliant beauties. So our mental nature originally possesses the elements of our intellectual existence; but it is dependent on learning and discipline, to develop its powers, and to disclose its indestructible lustre. And the more complete the cultivation which the mind receives, the more acute and profound does it become; and the more refined are those mental tastes and habits which give to character the beauties for which a coronet would be an impoverishing exchange. Analogous benefits accrue from a wise culture of the moral faculty; which is, indeed, of the first necessity, to fit men to discharge the trusts Providence reposes in them, and to act well their part on the great theatre of human life. A special discipline, also, is required to produce such habits of thought, as will adapt the mind to the subject on which it is to be chiefly employed through life. For instance, a severe mathematical training is necessary to one destined to burn out the lamp of life, in exploring and deciphering the

mysteries, which still are uninterpreted in the nebulous depths of space; while an extensive and accurate acquaintance with language, and an elaborate knowledge of its principles, must be attained by him who would employ this beautiful instrument of thought, to charm and subdue the reason of his fellow-men. So is there a spiritual training, which will prepare the mind to conduct the devotional worship of the Christian temple; and contribute power and effect to this department of ministerial service. We will mention some things which we think are calculated to produce such mental adaptation; without professing to include every topic the subject might suggest.

The mind should have a comprehensive acquaintance with Divine truth. Truth is to the mind what light is to the eye, the medium by which it becomes acquainted with intellectual things. And we can be conversant with the physical, the intellectual, or the invisible world, only to the extent of our knowledge. For instance, there may be richer gems in the unfathomed ocean, than any pearl which has been found beneath the azure waves; but as we have never seen them, we cannot analyze their properties, nor derive pleasure from their beauty. Many generations of the human race have lived and died, but we can have converse with them only in proportion as we make ourselves acquainted with the surviving monuments of their genius and power. So our fellowship with God must stop; first, at the point where revelation terminates; and secondly, at the point of our utmost acquaintance with that revelation. The devotional worship of a Bechuana, recently converted, would be necessarily limited to a few ideas, though it might possess great force in his own breast, derived from the gleams of poetic fire, or the purer flame of heavenly love. On the other hand, a mind profoundly acquainted with Divine truth, will have richer and more comprehensive views of the Divine nature and character, and will offer a nobler worship, and richer sacrifices; as a seraph owes his sublime adoration to the illimitable vision of God, which he ever contemplates. Divine truth being the medium of communion with God, that mind cannot be fully adapted to become the "chariot of fire," to a worshipping assembly, which has but a poor and contracted knowledge of the Supreme Majesty. The prophets rose to an ecstasy of devotion, when privileged to gaze on some glorious symbol of the Deity: Isaiah felt a convulsive and penitential agony, when he saw the Lord filling the temple. When God was on Sinai, the calm meek spirit of Moses feared and trembled. Those who serve in the sanctuary, therefore, should constantly turn their ear to the Holy Oracle, and with minds undistracted by the world, and undisturbed by passion, listen to its "still small voice," treasuring up every particle of truth so received, with greater care than they would hoard up grains of gold. Thus they will become possessors of copious materials of devout thought, and familiar with pleas which God never hears in vain.

Such knowledge of God is further beneficial because it produces, in the sanctified mind, a holy admiration and delight in God. As a consequence, the faculties will have unrestrained play in the seasons of devotion ; and the mind will neither be depressed by fear, nor confused by terror. Holy serenity of soul in the most solemn hours of communion with God, will prepare it to receive the reflected lines of spiritual glory ; as the deep repose of some embowered lake, fits it to reflect, in unbroken images, the landscape it has borrowed from earth and sky.

A mind that has been exercised with strong temptations. The soldier who has never seen an enemy, is a different man to the veteran who has struggled on a hundred battle-fields. And he cannot be thoroughly qualified to lead on the army of the faithful, who has never stood in the breach, nor borne the heat of sore and fiery trials. Temptations throw new light upon truth, as dark bodies reflect the light of the sun, and give it greater force, and a more striking application. They develop the latent evils of the heart ; in the first instance, they often revive corruptions, discover weakness, exasperate passion, show the power of unbelief, perplex the mind, and distress the soul. It is in such seasons that we learn really and earnestly to pray. Then we wrestle as did Jacob, until we obtain power with God. Then the mind, no longer motionless, is refreshed by the tempest which disturbs it ; and the heart is warmed by the fires, which test its principles, and purify its virtues. It was prayer, in such a season, that drew forth the Saviour's bloody sweat, "for being in an agony he prayed the more earnestly." If we would learn to pray with this exhausting energy, we must be content to know the anguish which excited it. If we dare not desire *such* a baptism, and the eye rests more calmly on humbler examples, in those we shall also learn the same truth,—that the spirit of prayer has become ardent, when the bitterness of soul has been intense. The pastor who would ask for the devotional sublimity of Paul, not only must petition for his heavenly visions, but be willing, at least, to endure his weakness and sorrow, his stripes and bonds.

A frame of mind habitually penitent. The reader will not require us to justify the position, that there is reason for the Christian, ever to feel the assuasive sorrow of true penitence. These remarks must only notice its connexion with the subject before us. Contrite grief gives tenderness and pathos to devotional feeling. Some of the most beautiful prayers recorded in Scripture, are those which express the emotions of penitent minds. The harp of David never gave out deeper melody, than when its heaven-toned music was in unison with the godly sorrow of his heart. Under its influence, the soul turns to the mercy-seat as surely as if attracted by a law of its spiritual nature. General experience will instruct us, that the hour of penitence has been the season of fervent and effectual prayer : in such an hour it was said of

Paul, "behold he prayeth!" When sorrow for sin is no longer felt, there will be no strong crying with tears at the mercy-seat; while the pastor's heart, being ever tender with penitential grief, will prepare his mind for fervent pleading in the sanctuary.

A comprehensive knowledge of the human heart. If "the proper study of mankind is man," it is emphatically so in the case of the Christian minister. He has to lead the devotions of a numerous congregation; therefore, he should know their spiritual state, with its multifarious wants and desires. He should know something of those sweet trains of devotional thought, which distinguish heavenly-minded believers. He should be familiar with the timid reasonings, the glimmering lights, and the troubled thoughts of the awakened mind. He should understand the various emotions of the penitent heart, its tearful anxiety when burdened with sin, its tremulous delight as the hope of mercy acquires power in the bosom. As he is a physician to a nature morally diseased, he should be skilled in spiritual anatomy; institute repeated analyses of our mental structure; and scrutinise the affections and the passions of the heart; that he may know the appropriate remedies to be solicited from the Giver of "every good and perfect gift." His mind should be like a mirror, within which should be pictured all the lights and shadows of human thought; and his heart should vibrate sympathetically, through the whole compass of human sensibility.

Private prayer must be practised in a truly devotional spirit. The closet is the inmost shrine of the Christian sanctuary, and the Christian minister should frequently enter there. When within, his mind should be earnest, his spirit solemn, his heart tender. There he should find Tabor, with its transfiguring glory; and Pisgah, with its visions of celestial beauty. There he should become conscious of the presence of ministering spirits, strengthening him as he trembles with the weakness of "prayer and fasting;" feel that awe of God which makes angels veil their faces; and that ever new delight which sustains their everlasting song. There his eye, calm with holiest thought, should contemplate the cross, until in mental vision—

"All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

There as a sinner he seeks mercy for his sins, weeps over his own folly, and has his conversation in heaven; there as a minister, he sheds the bitter tears of pastoral anguish, or rejoices in the blessedness of those who are wise in winning souls to Christ. If his oratory thus be a "valley of tears," or the "gate of heaven;" if he watches until the "breaking of the day," that he may have power with God and with men, his mind will become charged with spiritual electricity, which will communicate resistless power to public worship. On the other hand, if his devout exercises in the closet are vapid, tame, and hurried,

awakening neither elevated thought nor deep emotion, those of the sanctuary will bear a too faithful resemblance, and will be those "clouds without rain" which disappoint hope and weary the heart.

Such mental adaptation arises partly from circumstances over which we have no control. It comes not merely from watching unto prayer, but from more severe mortifications of the inward man; from those unhealing sorrows which human sympathy seldom cheers, and human power cannot relieve. And if the spirit of devotion be made more "perfect through suffering," a weighty motive is created meekly to receive the bitter cup, and say, "thy will be done." It arises, partly, within the range of voluntary effort; and the faithful watchman will employ every means which will enable him to give a fragrant unction to Divine worship.

We proceed further to remark, that ministerial qualification for public prayer must be derived—

II. FROM DIRECT PREPARATION.

We think the foundation of devotional excellence should be laid in our collegiate institutions.

The minds of the students are disciplined and instructed, that they may become able preachers of the Gospel; ought not the devotional spirit to be equally cultivated; and every assistance afforded which might prepare them to communicate fervour and pathos to public prayer? We think that the devotional services of the church are of sufficient importance to be the theme of a course of lectures; to be connected with such reading as would make the student master of the subject. The inquiry, how religious feeling, that is, at the same time, deep, devout, and pure, may be excited in the mind, in connexion with Divine worship, is of the highest importance. Such a question should be investigated on the inductive method. A large mass of facts requires to be interrogated. The whole of Christendom is the field, on which the searcher after truth has to enter. The devotional services of every church, ancient and modern, should be examined; and their effects, immediate and remote, traced. Their connexion with the growth or decline of piety, with the advance or repression of superstition, should be exactly marked; their character, when the germ of heresy was secretly evolving and expanding itself, scrutinised; and their distinctive peculiarities, when associated with pure and enlightened doctrine, observed. Here is one of the Sybilline volumes of Christianity, and he would be a great benefactor, who could read and understand its pages, decipher its symbols, and by wisdom thus gained, instruct the church, how her devotional services might give depth and tenderness to the religious affections, without allowing them to degenerate into imaginative fervour and superstitious formality, or evaporate in the mere exercise of a clear but unimpassioned intellect.

Some may fear entering such a labyrinth; but a noble nature never

shrinks from difficulty when it promises valuable results ; and no mere superficial training of the "sons of the prophets," will enable them to seize and unfold the principles, which will make evangelical Congregationalism the polar star of Christendom, and its ministers the "lights of the world."

In the Church of England, where the prayers are provided for the clergy, it is of minor importance that the officiating priest feel the spirit of his office. But with us, the devotions of the sanctuary are dependent on the mind of the minister; we cannot, therefore, exaggerate the importance of that mind being amply prepared for its most holy and solemn duty. In a sermon published by Dr. Halley, on "The Prosperity of Churches Promoted by Social Prayer," the following passage occurs:—"I am ready to admit, that devotional feeling may be well expressed in a pre-composed form; yet, surely this is a cold and constrained manner of giving utterance to earnest and heartfelt desires. The difference between extemporaneous prayer, and a pre-composed form, is simply this—in the former, the feelings suggest the words; in the latter, the words excite the feelings. But is it not more natural to feel before we speak, than to speak in order to make ourselves feel? In the one instance, there is an artificial excitement; in the other, the natural, spontaneous, immediate, and sincere emotions of the heart."—p. 34.

The difference here mentioned exists only to the extent of the minister who prays. His feelings suggest the words, but his words excite the feelings of the people. He speaks as he feels; but they hear him speak in order that they may feel. Within the pale of episcopacy, the family of Christ rely for devotional elevation on the form of prayer, furnished in the Prayer-book; Congregationalists are dependent on that form of words which gives expression to the devout thoughts and feelings of the pastor. In both instances the words excite the feelings of the worshipper, and not his feelings the words. The distinction mentioned, therefore, does not exist, with the exception already admitted, between the use of a pre-composed form, and extemporaneous supplication. Free prayer is, in one sense, a form to the people; the real difference between it and the use of liturgies is this: in the one case, there is the constant repetition of the same form; in the other, there is a form of words, constantly varied, according to the exigencies of the case, and the resources of the presbyter. And it is equally natural to listen to either, in a public assembly, in order that the spirit of prayer may rise and glow in the heart, as it is, in private devotion, to feel before we speak. Public prayer cannot be immediately beneficial, otherwise, than as the words read or spoken become the exciting cause of devotional feeling. In the episcopal church, we repeat, the spiritual affections of the people will be excited in proportion as its formularies can create the spirit of prayer;

and among ourselves, in proportion as the elements of true devotion exist in the free prayers of our pastors. Where liturgies are supplied, the capability of the priest to pray, may be neglected; but such negligence among us, will leave public worship destitute of its most sacred and spiritual influences.

We proceed, further, to state our conviction, that high devotional power cannot be gained in a day, or a year. It comes not by an afflatus of inspiration. It is not a flower we may gather the moment we would enjoy its fragrance, irrespective of careful cultivation. In most cases, distinguished mental power seems to come at length, without effort—as the last touches bring out the finished beauty of a painting; but it really is the result of long-continued and unwearied toil. Devotional excellence is not one of the exceptions to this rule. No mere act of the will can give existence to it; desire, though sincere, but existing only when the hour of prayer approaches, will not give out to the church its refreshing and blessed influences. We have no talisman by which, with the suddenness of a miracle, we can communicate to the mind the soaring wing of a sublime devotion. As this is the case, we think that serious attention should be paid to the subject in our colleges. We should rejoice if the learned and admirable men who fill the chairs in those institutions, sympathised with these views. It may be, that adequate attention is given to it, at the present time; but we have a strong impression that formerly it was not so. A Gethsemane, a sacred and secluded spot, should be found in every academic grove, that the heart may learn to agonise in prayer, before it ventures on the great embassy of mercy, to a world lying in wickedness.

We next suggest the frequent reading of devotional works. Truth is the instrument of sanctification. Thought is the legitimate source of feeling. Poetry gives fire to the imagination. A chapter in Bacon would stimulate the reflective faculties. The perception of analogies would be quickened by the study of Butler. In like manner, devout trains of thought would be suggested by reading devotional writings. We employ the accumulated learning of the world to enlarge our minds with knowledge, and to aid us in forming our principles. By such means we acquire comprehensive views, free ourselves from what is trifling or imbecile in intellect, and gather treasure from the mental wealth of past generations. Should we not train the heart, as we instruct the mind, by the lights of other ages? Will not devotional reading give power and depth to devout affections? The mind would become enriched with thoughts suitable for prayer to God; as, by other reading, it is in such as are adapted for discourses to men: and it is a more sublime learning to fit the mind for communion with God, than to prepare it to convey knowledge to men. The richest minds may here learn their poverty, and never do become so tearfully and meekly

humble, as when they feel how unworthy of the Divine majesty are the best and purest thoughts with which they approach him. It would gratify us to see among the several publications of the day, the "Minister's Devotional Library," comprising the choicest pieces gleaned from all ages of the church, and from the whole of Christendom. For such an object, we should not be afraid of passing over the boundary of Protestantism; and would obtain from Catholic sources, and from the early fathers, whatever would contribute to the treasury of devotional thought.

On the subject of the fathers, we would quote a passage from Bishop Burnet. That prelate, speaking of a distinguished clergyman of the Scotch Episcopal Church—Mr. Charteris—says: "He had read the fathers much, and gave me this notion of them, that in speculative points, for which writers of controversy searched into their works, they were but ordinary men; but their excellency lay in that which was least sought for, their sense of spiritual things, and of the pastoral care. In these he thought their strength lay. And he often lamented, not without some indignation, that, in the disputes about the government of the church, much pains were taken to seek out all those passages that showed what their opinions were; but that due care was not taken to set out the notions that they had of the sacred function, of the preparation of the mind, and inward vocation, with which men ought to come to holy orders, or of the strictness of life, the deadness to the world, the heavenly temper, and the constant application to the doing of good, that became them." The slight acquaintance we have with their writings confirms these observations. There is much that is weak, credulous, and fanciful, in their views; but their piety was deep, spiritual, and heavenly. Much might be extracted from their writings, which would exalt the devotional spirit of our ministers, and more effectually prepare them to conduct the worship of the sanctuary. The Church of Rome, unquestionably, has possessed many men of extraordinary piety; and their devotional writings are valuable legacies to those who have the candour and the wisdom to accept them. The liturgies of ancient churches are also valuable, as compendiums of devotional sentiment, and might be read with profit. As illustrative of the class of writings which we would recommend for the devotional reading, we would mention—

1. The Liturgy of the Church of England.
2. The Presbyterian Directory of Worship.
3. The Missal and Pontificals of the Church of Rome.
4. King on the Greek Church; though it will not yield so much fruit as the preceding.
5. The Liturgy bearing the name of Chrysostom, and found in his works.
6. Bingham's Chapters on the Services of the Early Church.

7. Bishop Andrews' Devotions, published as a "Tract for the Times."

8. *Sacra Privata*. By Bishop Wilson.

9. Jeremy Taylor's Prayers;—grand and beautiful, but too florid.

10. The Ancient Latin Hymns, may be read with advantage.

Let not the timid, or the partially instructed, apprehend danger to sound theology, from intercourse with such works as some of those specified. It must be remembered, that these observations have reference, not to "babes in Christ," but to masters in Israel, who constitute our ministry. They have grappled with the heresies which might be suspected to lurk in such pages; and what might be prejudicial to the uninformed, is a healthy exercise, and may be of singular advantage to them. It would pain us to suppose that any injury could arise to them, from breathing amid the dust of the Vatican, or from keeping vigils at Oxford. We have found an occasional pilgrimage to both, perfectly safe; though it makes us less disposed to vaunt our superiority, in the language of pride or contempt. And he but scantily knows the mind he would instruct and prepare for heaven, who has not traced the history of its mental slavery to the triple crown; or who is surprised at the homage it now pays, to the meeker guardians of reason and conscience, in the Anglican university.

The occasional writing of prayers would be beneficial. Such a practice has the sanction of great antiquity. Numerous examples are found in the inspired writings, some as ancient as the earliest of those documents,—granting an anterior date to the book of Job. The song of Moses by the Red Sea, and that of Deborah on her triumph over Sisera, though more strictly hymns of praise, yet are devotional in their spirit, and illustrative of the feelings of the heart. The Psalms furnish voluminous evidence of the practice of writing prayers. Most of them were penned as devout exercises: their employment in the worship of the temple, was a happy use to which they were subsequently adapted. The writing of Hezekiah when he had been sick; the Lamentations of Jeremiah; the song of the mother of our Lord, of Zacharias, and of Simeon, are examples of a similar practice. In every age of the Christian church, eminently devout persons have been accustomed to compose prayers. It would be interesting to give many beautiful illustrations, but the length to which these remarks have run, forbids.

We are satisfied that it is a valuable exercise, and would be highly advantageous to the Christian minister. Let him select some special occasions, or some particular characters, and bring the resources of his mind to bear on the subject; and he would soon find precious fruit springing from it. The composition of a prayer weekly, would give such copiousness and richness of devout thought, and such precision and force of language, as would amply repay the time and

labour. We do not undervalue extemporaneous power, yet the profound, the comprehensive, and the truly sublime in style and sentiment, usually proceeds from the deep musings, the slow conceptions, and the solitary toils of the mind. Momentary inspiration has done little for men, and less for the world, than it imagines: arduous, exact, and patient thought has given birth to the noblest movements of learning and genius. The works which men will not "willingly let die," have been produced by close and laboured application. By such efforts, the Greek tragedians produced their majestic verse; Demosthenes, the orations which gave him his lasting fame; and Dante, the *Divina Commedia*. In like manner, the devotional musings, and the profound meditations of the study will produce prayers of such chastened pathos, and of such elevated thought, as will not otherwise be attained. We do not propose that such carefully-composed prayers should be committed to memory, and repeated in the pulpit. Their legitimate value would be,—first, the solemn act of devotion which originated them; and secondly, when their exact expression and arrangement were forgotten, the deep-toned devotional feeling they would leave in the heart. By such preparation there would be given to extempore prayer freshness, beauty, and power; by such toil, and discipline, and tears in the study, the devotions of the sanctuary would become a most interesting and effective part of public worship.

The intercessory presence of the Holy Spirit must be sought. We mention this last, not because we consider it of minor importance, but to convey the conviction which we feel, that it furnishes no reason for indifference to such preparation, as has been suggested in the preceding observations. On the contrary, no language can adequately express our sense of the necessity of his Divine assistance. He must give holy energy to the cry, "Abba, Father." Our infirmities need the "help" of his wisdom and power. The groaning which cannot be uttered in articulate speech, will exist only when his grace bedews the soul. Diligently using every means of improvement, the pastor will still remember, that the best gifts are those of the Spirit; and that no preparation is adequate, or can be successful, until it is crowned with his pentecostal influences.

We may add, that a just conviction of the importance of the devotional parts of Divine service, is indispensable. And no circumstance connected with ministerial duty, may more justly oppress a conscientious mind, than the fact, that the devotional worship of the congregation depends, chiefly, on the capability of his own mind to communicate to theirs, the pure affections, and the elevated sentiments of true piety. It is so easy to pray fifteen or twenty minutes, that the difference should be carefully marked, between mere facility of expression, and the power of uttering devout thoughts fraught with heavenly influences. Such views of the importance of public prayer,

will produce ardent desires in faithful men, to attain to great excellence in this hallowed part of Divine service.

It will not be understood that these remarks attribute the low state of devotion to ministerial deficiency. There are other and grave questions which require discussion, before we could be either competent or entitled to give judgment whence it is, that the devotional worship of dissenting congregations is, comparatively, so cold, and their manner so frequently irreverent. Yet we are confident that the devoted men who are the glory of our churches, are willing to inquire by what means they may become as efficient in their devout exercises, as they are in the sober and enlightened advocacy of the doctrines of the cross. To suppose that our ecclesiastical system is the exact counterpart of truth; or that our practical illustration of it is absolutely perfect, would more imply contracted views and ignorance of human nature, than an enlightened and faithful adherence to principle. We firmly believe that our churches embody in their constitution very much that is apostolic; but we do not believe that they possess, in the degree which is attainable, the temper and spirit of apostolic piety, or that moral greatness which it would inspire. Is not improvement possible? and if it be within our reach, should we not thoughtfully and earnestly aim at it? It would gratify us, if the subject of public prayer were thoroughly discussed in your pages. It is a matter of vital importance to our stability and success.

The human heart, undoubtedly, has deep religious tendencies, which crave with the irrepressible force of nature, for the warmth and tenderness of devout emotion. Religion is a principle, but it is also a passion. As a principle, it guides the few,—the calm and the enlightened; as a passion, it controls the multitude. No art or discipline has ever given to the mass of mankind a cold clearness of intellectual vision; with them, the imagination will ever be a powerful means of influencing the reason; and a gush of feeling in the heart, will carry truth to the mind, with greater force, than the most correct and profound logic.

Romanism meets this instinctive necessity of our moral nature. By her gorgeous ceremonies, she constantly plays upon the fancy; and by her solemn music and devotional sentiments, she pours a ravishing sweetness on the soul. The service of the Episcopal church is decorous, dignified, and solemn. Some Nonconformists may demur to this admission; but our reply is, that it is felt to be beautiful and impressive by multitudes, some of whom are distinguished by refined taste, cultivated minds, and earnest piety. That it is not so felt by us, does not make the proposition true, that it is not so felt by any. John Wesley had the sagacity to constitute his societies and to arrange their worship, not on the basis of his own calm temperament, but on that of mankind at large. Methodism is not the religion of those who possess

erudite or speculative minds, or a dignified taste ; but it is the religion of the mass of the people. Their feelings are warmed and gratified, by the exciting services of that influential section of the church. It is not in the pulpit, but in the prayer-meeting and the class-room, that its power chiefly resides. These are its scenes of fervid feeling, and of attractive sympathy ; and from them its disciples come forth, refreshed, strengthened, and happy.

We are not pleading for any of these systems, but request attention to one great principle illustrated in them all : namely, the importance of adapting our modes of worship, *not to human depravity*, but to the thirst for religious emotion which has its being in the human heart. Congregational worship, in its present state, does not sufficiently provide for this element of our suffering nature. Our piety lives in the intellect, more than it opens "a well of water" in the heart. It is sober and intelligent ; but it is calm and passionless. Men of philosophic mould, or sturdy sense, crowd our ranks ; but the feeble-minded, the unreflective, the trembling in spirit, and all who can think deeply only as they feel intensely, seek elsewhere a provision for their spiritual necessities. If these observations have truth in them, they will justify our earnest desire that there should be given to public prayer, those "fervent and effectual" influences, which will reach the hearts of the assembled worshippers.

Such spiritual training and mental discipline as we have noticed, is calculated to produce a mind fertile in holy thought, rich in sacred associations, imbued with hallowed feeling, and ardent in its heavenly affections. But as there are diversities of gifts, it would be an error to conclude that devotional excellence is limited to one precise form. One mind will climb the clefts of the rock, that with the Jewish law-giver, it may behold the glory of God, in its sublime and awful manifestations ; and there find the scenes most calculated to communicate solemnity to the spirit, and humility to the heart. Another, by an almost unconscious impulse, would seek the milder manifestations of the Divine glory associated with the beautiful and imposing service of the temple ; and on its "holy ground" most deeply feel the inspiration of devout emotions. Another mind would find it congenial to its habits of thought to meditate continually on the words of Jesus, until it would become adorned with the moral beauty and spiritual tenderness, which his discourses are calculated to communicate. And another would find its chosen scene of contemplation, amid the terrors of his passion and death—Gethsemane, by a gracious sympathy, would strongly attract the heart ; and the anguish of the cross, beyond all things else, would deepen the spirit of prayer.

Hence, in accordance with the characteristic tendencies of the mind, will be the varied excellence of devotional exercises. Flowers have different hues and various forms, but there is beauty in them all—even

in the most neglected. So it is with devotional excellence ; and from the humblest and feeblest of such efforts, may we not hope that a spiritual fragrance ascends to God, which makes it in Christ Jesus a sweet and an acceptable offering ?

*

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

(Concluded from Page 565.)

IF, notwithstanding all the evidence which has been adduced, it is still assumed, that the term *water* must be interpreted literally ; then the second point to be established is, that one and the same birth is referred both to water and to the Spirit. Now in all languages it is common, when the same word is to be understood in connexion with several others, to express it once, and to leave it to be supplied by the reader where it is omitted by the writer. Thus, in the first chapter, 12th and 13th verses, we read—"To those who received him, to them he gave power to become the children of God, even to those who believe in his name ; who are *born not of blood, nor of natural affection, nor of human purpose, but of God.*" οἱ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς, ἀλλ' ἐκ Θεοῦ ἐγενήθησαν. The term *born* is here used but once, but it must be supplied three times to express the sense completely ; and it is certain, that while a spiritual change is meant by the word in the last clause, a corporeal change is meant by it in the first, if not in all the other clauses. Though, at least, two various births are here referred to, once only is the term expressed, and where it is supplied, it is with a different application. So in this passage, if water literally were referred to, it may be necessary to supply before the term Spirit, the word which is expressed before the term water, and then the complete sense of the declaration will be—"Unless one be born of water, and be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That it is much more probable that two different births are attributed to two different sources, than that one and the same birth is attributed to both, appears from the following considerations :—

1. The difference between the nature of water, and of the Spirit, at once shows, that the changes to which they bear the same relation, must be very different. As in the passage already quoted, the difference in the nature of the clauses renders it evident that the term *born* is to be supplied where it is not expressed, and to be supplied in a different sense, so it is in this passage. The entire dissimilarity between the nature of water, and of the Spirit of God, indicates, that to be born of water is one thing, and to be born of the Spirit another thing, wholly different, and infinitely superior. If it is necessary that a

man should be born of water, it is also necessary that he should be born of the Spirit. There is nothing then to indicate, in what way being born of water, and being born of the Spirit, are associated; or whether they have any actual connexion. It is not said that they who are born of water, are also born of the Spirit; but that only those who are both born of water, and born of the Spirit, can enter the kingdom of God.*

2. The Jewish usage, from which the phraseology of the text is thought to be derived, proves that to be born of water is simply to experience a change of condition in respect to a religious community. If water be not regarded simply as a metaphor for the Spirit, there is nothing in the sacred Scriptures to elucidate the meaning of the phrase "born of water." All, who suppose that water literally is meant, explain this passage by reference to Jewish customs and modes of speech. The Jews were accustomed to describe a proselyte as one *new born*. It does not appear that they attributed this new birth to proselyte baptism, which was but one of the ceremonies of initiation; nor that they ever employed the phrase *to be born of water*. They spoke of the proselyte to Judaism as new born, not because he was spiritually renewed, but because he was as it were introduced to a new world, to form new associations, to pursue a new course of conduct, to acquire new dispositions and habits. His birth was a change of circumstances, and not of character; it was external, and not internal; it was ecclesiastical, and not spiritual. In the same way, it might naturally be said of those who became proselytes to Christianity, that they, in a similar manner, were born anew. And as an external introduction to Judaism was referred to all the Jewish ceremonies of initiation, so an external introduction to Christianity would be referred to the one Christian ceremony of initiation—to the rite of baptism. In this way, all professed disciples of Christ might be described as born of water. The Jewish rites, which produced an outward change, were emblems of that spiritual change which they could not produce. And so the Christian rite, while effecting a

* When John, addressing the multitudes who came to him, said, concerning Jesus, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire," (*ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ*.) Matt. iii. 11, Luke iii. 16, he could not have referred only to the apostles of Jesus. Therefore, the fire here mentioned, could not be the tongues of fire which sat on the heads of the apostles at the day of Pentecost; and these are never described as a baptism with fire. The term fire must, therefore, be interpreted figuratively. If it is a metaphor for the Holy Spirit, then this passage confirms the metaphorical interpretation of water in our Lord's address. If the *Holy Spirit* and *fire* are two expressions, literal and figurative, for one object, so are *water* and *Spirit*. But if the fire be used for the punishment of the wicked, then two baptisms will be referred to, of a nature entirely different, though only one term is expressed. Thus, whichever meaning be assigned to this passage, it is alike adverse to the interpretation, which attributes one regeneration to two distinct objects—the water and the Spirit.

corresponding outward change, would emblematically inculcate the higher spiritual change, and not instrumentally effect it.

It cannot be any just objection with those who suppose that baptism with water is here mentioned, that no reference is elsewhere made in the New Testament to this external regeneration, since in no other passage is regeneration named in connexion with water. It is entirely from Jewish customs and phraseology that the inference is drawn, that one who received Christian baptism would be described as *born of water*. But in Jewish usage, the birth attributed to rites of initiation, was merely an external change. If this usage gave rise to a corresponding Christian usage, it must have been with a similar reference to an external change. The supposition that to be born of water in Christian usage, denoted to be spiritually renewed by water, has not the least support from Jewish usage, but is in direct opposition to it.

The new birth, which is peculiar to Christianity, is spiritual in its nature, and in its origin. On this it is, that our Lord so solemnly insists. But this is no outward change, which, however important, may still leave the character unchanged. It is that awakening of the mind to new views and sentiments, to new purposes and efforts—that commencement of true holiness and blessedness—which can only result from a spiritual union to Christ, and which can only be proved by a moral resemblance to him. The strongest metaphors are employed in the sacred Scriptures to express the greatness of this change, and its nature and effects are clearly described. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away; lo, all things are new."—2 Cor. v. 17. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance."—Gal. v. 22. "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed to the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."—2 Cor. iii. 18. But this regeneration is never attributed to the rite of baptism, in the word of God.

3. If baptism with water is here mentioned, its necessity is explained by the *fact*, that men were required thus to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord; and consequently, it gives no support to the *conjecture*, that baptism with water was necessary as the means of the baptism of the Spirit. If our Lord declares baptism with water to be necessary, he certainly does not state why it is necessary. Any reason assigned for its supposed necessity, must be simply our inference; it cannot have the authority of his doctrine. Christ commanded all his disciples publicly to acknowledge him, and he accompanied this command with the most solemn admonition,—“Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of

God."—Luke xii. 8. We must avow our faith in the Saviour, and associate ourselves with his followers, if we would participate in the blessings of his kingdom. Now the reception of Christian baptism was one mode of acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah; and all were required in this manner to confess Christ. Thus St. Peter said—"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, on account of Jesus Christ."—Acts ii. 38. They who through fear of reproach or persecution, were deterred from receiving this mark of discipleship, came under the awful denunciation of the Lord: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in the glory of himself, and of the Father, and of the holy angels."—Luke ix. 26. The necessity of receiving baptism with water, when there could be no doubt of its Divine appointment, is perfectly explained by the fact, that it was one way in which men were commanded to confess Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. This necessity cannot, therefore, give the slightest countenance to the conjectural hypothesis, that baptism with water was the means by which the baptism of the Spirit was given.

On the supposition that the term water is to be taken literally, and that the water of baptism is here meant, though of this rite not the least mention is made, it only follows that baptism with water is declared to be necessary. Most certainly our Lord does not declare why it is necessary. To infer that, because the term born occurs but once, only one birth can be referred to, is to violate the most common rules of language. The difference between the nature of water, and of the Spirit of God, shows that the changes which are effected by them are equally different. The usage of the Jews attributed only an external change to a religious ceremony; and the Scriptures attribute a spiritual change only to the truth and the Spirit of God. The sacred histories most clearly state that the reception of Christian baptism was necessary as a profession of discipleship: they give no intimation that it was necessary as the means of regeneration. The Old Testament presents many instances of ceremonies being absolutely enjoined, as emblems of truth, and signs of outward privileges, but neither the Old nor the New Testament exhibits any doctrines, facts, or promises, to support the strange and superstitious notion, that the application of a material element to the body, will effect a moral change in the soul.

If notwithstanding these considerations, it be still maintained, not only that the term water is to be taken literally, but also that one and the same regeneration is here referred to the water and the Spirit, then it must be admitted that our Lord does teach that, in some cases, those who were baptized with water, were also at the same time baptized with the Spirit, and thus *born of water, and of the Spirit*. The declaration that "unless one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God," implies certainly that some were thus born—that

Nicodemus, to whom the declaration was made, and such as he, might be thus renewed, and must be, for them to enter the kingdom of God. But it does not justify the inference that children are regenerated by baptism,—

1. Because there is nothing to show that our Lord at all referred to infant children. He spoke to Nicodemus of that which respected him, and all who could receive religious instruction. There is no more reason for supposing that infants are comprehended in this declaration, than there is for supposing that they are included in the awful statement of the 18th verse—"He who believeth not is condemned already." They appear to us as incapable in infancy of the regeneration promised, as they are of the faith required; and they are not represented in Scripture as the subjects of the former, any more than of the latter.

2. It is not pretended by any that all who are baptized with water, also receive the Spirit. It cannot possibly be inferred that the water and the Spirit are always combined. It is acknowledged that without some knowledge of the Gospel, true repentance, and faith in Christ, baptism with water will not spiritually regenerate adult persons. These moral conditions, although not mentioned here, are by all declared to be necessary to the spiritual efficacy of the rite of baptism, when administered to those who are capable of religious knowledge, sentiment, and purpose. If our Lord referred to baptism at all, he referred to the baptism of such as Nicodemus. If he attributed any efficacy to baptism, it could only be under those conditions, without which baptism would have been useless to Nicodemus. If he taught Nicodemus that he must be regenerated by water and the Spirit, he did not teach that this regeneration could be obtained either by him, or by any, without Christian knowledge, repentance, and faith, but only in connexion with them.

3. Even if this passage be understood to declare the necessity of baptism to infants, it would not follow that they were regenerated by baptism. If an adult be regenerated by baptism, to his regeneration two classes of conditions are held to be necessary. First, there must be the moral conditions of Christian knowledge, penitence, and faith, without which, it is admitted, baptism will not regenerate an adult. And, secondly, there must be the ceremonial conditions, the due observance of the prescribed rite. These conditions must co-exist in the case of an adult, or his regeneration will not take place. Now when a child is baptized in infancy, it is impossible that these two conditions should co-exist: there may be the ceremonial conditions, there cannot be the moral. The regeneration of one baptized in infancy, must be separated from one of the two conditions admitted to be both necessary to an adult. Which alternative then is the more reasonable and scriptural, that those who are baptized in infancy are then regenerated spiritually,

when only the one ceremonial condition of regeneration can exist ;—or that they are regenerated in after-life, whenever their Christian knowledge, repentance, and faith—the moral conditions of regeneration—are added to the ceremonial, and they possess that state of mind without which baptism with water, however administered to an adult, would be wholly vain ?

That some spiritual grace should accompany the act by which any intelligently, sincerely, and honestly acknowledge Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, may be very probable. But that the same act without intelligence, sincerity, or devotion, should be accompanied with the same spiritual grace, is in the highest degree improbable. It is to imagine that the moral and spiritual conditions of regeneration, are of less moment than the physical and ritual. The evidence that Christian baptism was administered to infants, depends for its conclusiveness on the supposition that Christian baptism was similar in its nature and efficacy to Jewish baptism, though emblematical of higher truths, and the sign of better privileges. If the means of regeneration to any, there is no scriptural evidence that it should be given to infants ; still less, that it is the means of their regeneration.

If Christ associates the Spirit with the water of baptism, it is only with baptism when intelligently, honestly, and piously received, as a means of grace, and a confession of faith in him. And these words do not afford the slightest evidence that our Lord ever associated the Spirit with the water of baptism, when there was no intelligence, honesty, or piety in the subject of the rite, or the capacity for any moral and religious affections.

From this investigation it appears that the application of this passage to the doctrine of the baptismal regeneration of infants, rests on assumptions as extraordinary, and unreasonable, as any on which human credulity has ever reposed. And after these assumptions have been made, the doctrine cannot by any ingenuity be exhibited as the declaration of the text. *It is, at best, merely a doubtful inference from it.* First, it is assumed, that the term water is used literally, though the spiritual nature of the subject, the figurative term associated with it, the whole connexion of the passage, and the analogy of all similar Scripture expressions, are opposed to the literal interpretation of the term, and show that it is simply a metaphor. Then, in the next place, it is assumed that there is but one birth which results from the water and Spirit in union, although their nature is so incongruous ; and, in Jewish phraseology, to be born of any rite, would only refer to an external change. And when these assumptions have been made, the address to Nicodemus, respecting the necessity of baptism, cannot be shown to have any reference to infants ; and, even if it does teach the necessity of their baptism, it cannot possibly teach that they are regenerated by baptism. If the agency of the Spirit were always

combined with the water of baptism, then the baptism of adults would secure the regeneration of the ignorant and profane, as well as of the penitent believer. To assert that the knowledge, repentance, and faith, without which the water of baptism would not secure spiritual regeneration to Nicodemus, are unnecessary to the regeneration of children, is to assert, what has not the least support from this passage, or from any part of the word of God. The inference, that if baptism, *with* Christian knowledge, penitence, and faith, secure that agency of the Spirit of God by which the soul is regenerated, that therefore, the words and the water alone will secure the same invaluable blessing, is an inference to which neither Scripture, reason, nor experience give any support, but which they all alike condemn. It savours of the formal and material character of all superstitions, and is as much as possible contrary to the moral and spiritual character of the religion of Christ.

If any apology is required for the prolonged investigation of this one passage, it will be afforded by the statement of Dr. Pusey in regard to his interpretation of this text: "However men may think that the words do not *require* this interpretation, they will readily admit that it is *an* obvious, perhaps, (apart from other considerations,) *the more* obvious meaning; add, then, to this, that the Christian church uniformly (?) for fifteen centuries, interpreted these his words of baptism; that on the ground of this text alone, they urged the necessity of baptism; that upon it, mainly, they identified regeneration with baptism."—p. 42. It is utterly impossible that any man should know what the church of Christ *uniformly* believed concerning this text. Some important exceptions to Dr. Pusey's statement may be hereafter adduced. It must, however, be acknowledged, that these opinions have been very general. But this consideration is deprived of nearly all its weight by the admission of Dr. Pusey, that they "who quote the text of baptism, go not about to *prove* its reference to it; *they assume it*, see it."—p. 51. If the doctrine of baptismal regeneration arose from those formal and superstitious tendencies which are almost universal, then any passage of the word of God in which the terms water and Spirit were associated, would be *assumed* to refer to it. While the conclusions of wise and good men on subjects they have carefully examined ever deserve much respect; the notions which they may credulously *assume*, cannot be worthy of any confidence. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," is the dictate of reason, and of revelation.

The only other passage in the New Testament in which it is supposed that the regeneration of the soul is attributed to the rite of baptism, is in the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus, iii. 5: "When the kindness and philanthropy of God our Saviour was manifested, not on account of the good works which we had performed, but according to his own

mercy, he saved us, by the cleansing of regeneration, and the renewing of a sacred influence, which he poured forth on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Ἐσωσεν ἡμᾶς, διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας, καὶ ἀνακαίνωστος πνεύματος ἁγίου.*

The *cleansing* here mentioned is assumed to be the washing with water in baptism. The cleansing *of* regeneration is assumed to mean the cleansing which regenerates. Thus, by these two assumptions, the text is made to declare, that baptism with water administered in the name of Christ, is the means of regenerating the soul. Of this passage, as of the former, it may be remarked, that some terms are admitted to be used figuratively, that there is no mention of baptism, and that there is not in the context any allusion to water. Most astonishing would it be if such a doctrine as baptismal regeneration

* The following passages will suffice to prove, that λουτρὸν is used for a religious purification, in which there is no bathing or immersion of the body.

"Ἡνώγει βυτῶν

τῶδ' αὖν ἐνεγκεῖν λουτρά καὶ χοὰς ποθεῖν."

"He directed them to bring *ablutions* of running water, and libations."—*Sophocles, Edipus Coloneus*, 1599.

"Τοὶ δ' ὑψίβατον

τρίποδ' ἀμφίπυρον λουτρῶν ὁσίων
θέσθ' ἐπὶ καίρον."

"Let these set with fire around the high caldron fit for sacred *ablutions*."—*Sophocles, Ajax*, 1405.

"Πατὴρ χέοντες λουτρά."

"Pouring the *ablutions* for your father."—*Sophocles, Electra*, 84.

"Λουτρά προσφέρειν," occurs, *Id.* 464.

"Λουτρά τ' ἐπὶ χρῶϊ βάλε."

"Cast *ablutions* on your body."—*Euripides, Orestes*, 303.

"Τὰ δὲ σὰ δροσέοντα λουτρά."

"Thy dewy *ablutions*."—*Euripides, Troades*, 839.

"Κτεῖν' ὡς ἐν Ἀργεὶ φόνια λουτρά σ' ἀναμένει."

"Slay, since in Argos *ablutions* for murder await thee."—*Euripides, Hecuba*, 1281.

"Καλεῖται δὲ τοῦτο τὸ λουτρὸν φωτισμὸς."

"This *ablution* is called an enlightening."—*Justin ii. Apol.* 94.

"Τὸ ἐν ὕδατι τότε λουτρὸν ποιοῦνται."

"They then perform the *ablution* with water."—*Id.* 107.

"Λουτρὸν καλοῦμεν τὸ βάπτισμα ὡς ἔκπλυνσιν."

"We call baptism an *ablution* because it cleanses."—*Greg. Naz.* 40 *Orat.* 639.

"Λουτρὸν ἐστὶ καὶ καθάρσιον ἁμαρτημάτων τὰ δάκρυα."

"Tears are an *ablution* and expiation of sins."—*Chrys. Hom.* 78.

were true, and yet this the only passage in all the epistles of the New Testament, in which the regeneration of the soul is referred to baptism. But both of the assumptions on which the application of the text depends are destitute of proof, and are opposed to the general usage of language.

1. The term which is rendered in the authorised version *washing*, also denotes cleansing, without any reference to water. The verb from which it is derived, is used for that purification of the mind, of which sprinkling with blood was the emblem, and not washing with water. "To him who loves us, and who *cleansed* us from our sins with his own blood,"—*λούσαντι*.—Rev. i. 5. But if the term were never so used literally, such a figurative use is common in all languages, and is demanded by the context. The salvation is spiritual, therefore the cleansing by which it is secured must be spiritual. The regeneration is spiritual, and therefore the cleansing associated with it must be spiritual. The term for *regeneration* is interpreted figuratively, and not literally; and so the term for *cleansing*, if it denoted *washing*, must not be interpreted literally for the washing of the body, but figuratively for the purification of the soul. As the *pouring forth* is metaphorical, so must the *washing* be metaphorical also.

2. The phrase, the *cleansing of regeneration*, according to the general usage of the genitive case, denotes the cleansing which results from regeneration, and not the cleansing which produces regeneration. The cleansing, by the common law of language, depends on the regeneration, and not the regeneration on the cleansing. There are exceptions to this rule, as to every other, but they are comparatively few, and obviously different from the text, occasioning no ambiguity of expression. The *cleansing of regeneration*, and the *renewing of a sacred influence*, are phrases precisely similar. The latter cannot mean the renewing which *produces* a Divine influence; it must mean the renewing which *results* from a Divine influence. So the former cannot mean the cleansing which *produces* regeneration; but it must mean the cleansing which *results* from regeneration. General usage and the parallelism of these phrases, require this interpretation. The statement of this passage is, that God saves us by a purification of mind, which is the result of regeneration, which regeneration or renewing is the effect of the Holy Spirit which he bestows by Jesus Christ. The gift of the Holy Spirit,—the regeneration of the soul,—and the purification of the whole man,—are the three successive parts of that process by which Christ saves those who trust to him. That the purification of the soul depends on its regeneration, and that this renewing of the mind is the effect of the Spirit of God, given by Jesus Christ to the prayers of his followers, are truths unquestioned by us. But, instead of confirming, they contradict the notion, that the soul of man is

regenerated and saved by the washing of water applied to his body by the hands of a fellow-man.*

These are the only two passages in the Word of God, in which it is by any supposed that the regeneration of the soul is expressly connected with the water of baptism. But in neither is there any mention of baptism. So far from exhibiting, with clearness and certainty, the extraordinary doctrine of baptismal regeneration, these passages do not even allude to it. It is only by the most unwarrantable assumptions, by interpreting literally, terms which, if they occurred in any other book, would be universally understood figuratively, that even the semblance of proof can be educed from these texts. But these are the two pillars on which the whole doctrinal fabric rests, and it must fall if these are found to yield it no support. And it will fall when, as men have already ceased, in the interpretation of nature, to follow the fancies and theories of the ancient philosophers; they shall also cease, in the interpretation of the Bible, to follow the ignorance or superstition of ancient theologians.†

ACCOUNT OF THE DISSENTERS IN RUSSIA,

PARTICULARLY OF THE DUEHOVNEE CHRISTIANEE, OR SPIRITUAL
CHRISTIANS.

CHAPTER V.

Church Polity.—Meetings for Worship.—Village Customs.—Consistent Conduct.—
Exceptions to this—and Remedy for Errors in Doctrine and Practice.

THE church polity of the Duehovnee Christianee is essentially Congregational; but there lived, some years ago, at Schatsk, in the government of Tamboff, an old man, who was considered the patriarch

* It may be observed that even if the cleansing, or washing, here mentioned, were the rite of baptism, the *washing of regeneration* would denote, the washing which was the *sign* of regeneration, and not the washing which was the *means* of regeneration; the former signification being by all admitted to be scriptural, and the latter not so. Then, the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, would be two means of salvation, but there would be nothing to show that the one was secured by the other.

† There are many other passages supposed to teach *indirectly* baptismal regeneration. In some, by the literal interpretation of terms and phrases obviously figurative, texts are made to declare the importance of water to man's spiritual salvation. In others, by the assumption that the only baptism of the New Testament is baptism with water. The same importance is attributed to the rite of baptism. But the evidence of these passages is slight compared with that of the two selected for investigation, and apart from them is allowed to be inconclusive. The principles already advanced may be very readily applied to all the other texts adduced in this controversy, and we therefore leave them to the consideration of our readers.

of the body. No letters or documents of any kind were issued or received; but he was supposed to be in correspondence with the whole of the community, and to receive early information of every thing of importance which occurred in any of their assemblies. I have not the means of ascertaining whether a similar position is now occupied by any one. It is not an official situation, but in the case referred to, was simply the result of circumstances.

In most of the villages in which they reside there is an elder, who conducts their public worship; and when the community is numerous, more than one officiate as such. To this office they elect individuals from amongst themselves, and only men who are somewhat advanced in life, who are thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures, and who live in strict conformity to the precepts of our Saviour and his apostles. In general, the elder supports himself by his own labour. When, however, it is considered desirable that he should devote his time exclusively to the ministry; conducting worship in his own village; visiting the brethren in neighbouring villages; and conducting worship amongst them; he and his family are supported by those amongst whom he labours,—one supplying him with meal, another with bread, a third with corn, another with meat, &c., that he may be enabled to spend all his time in ministering to the spiritual benefit of his brethren.

The elders are occasionally set apart to the duties of their office with prayer, and the laying on of the hands of those who elect them to become their ministers; but the omission of this ceremony is more general. When it happens that no elder is present at a meeting for worship, any one of the brethren may, at the request of those assembled, conduct their worship on that occasion.

In Russia, the Sabbath is reckoned from six o'clock in the evening of Saturday. About three o'clock in the afternoon of that day, the *Duehovnee Christianee* may be seen driving their cattle home from the fields, and making other preparations for the approaching Sabbath; they afterwards assemble in the place appointed for worship, and engage in prayer, in reading the Scriptures, and in religious conversation. In these engagements they continue so long as they feel enlivened by the Holy Spirit; the females and children usually return about eight or nine o'clock; but the meeting is frequently prolonged till after midnight. In defence of this practice they adduce the conduct of Paul, at Troas, "When he talked a long while, even till break of day."—Acts xx. 11. At these meetings the elder having prayed, and read a portion of Scripture, delivers a short expository discourse, or takes the lead in conversation on the practical or devotional improvement which may be made from the passage read. They then sing or chant portions of the New Testament and Psalms: two verses are read aloud by the elder, and then sung by the

whole congregation ; other two verses are then read and sung in like manner, and this is continued so long as the elder thinks proper. There is little harmony in their song, but it is sung with their whole heart, and they appear to enjoy it greatly. They then kneel—the elder in the midst—and the others around, with their faces directed towards him, when the elder leads in prayer, commencing with the Lord's Prayer, and concluding with extemporaneous supplications. I asked one of them why they knelt around the elder at such times. His reply was, " Lest we should appear to any stranger to be praying to any image or painting, which may be upon the wall. We must," continued he, " abstain from the very appearance of evil."

Other portions of Scripture are read, and brethren of approved Christian character give expositions of these, or exhortations founded upon them, according as their minds may be impressed with the subject. It is frequently the case, that in these exercises, several of the brethren take part. The numerous intervals are spent in silent prayer ; and they unite in prayer before they dismiss.

A similar meeting is held on Sunday before noon ; and many do not partake of food from the commencement of the Sabbath, till the close of the service. They do not consider fasting to be enjoined upon Christians, but they find it a help to devotion ; and whenever it operates otherwise, they discontinue the practice. They fast frequently, and in doing so, abstain entirely from food—the men for a whole day, or half-a-day ; the women, so long as they can without injury.

Meetings similar to those described above, are also held on the afternoon and evening of Sunday. One of them was asked, how they could engage in those services on the Sunday, after having been employed in worship till late on the preceding night ? He appeared to be surprised at such a question, and replied to the effect, that when the heart is lively in spiritual affections there is no weariness.

They have, also, meetings for worship on other evenings of the week, when they can secure the assistance of an elder ; and they cheerfully leave their work in the fields at whatever hour an elder, passing through the village, may propose to meet with them for worship. The old people, the females, and the children, moreover, frequently assemble to read the Scriptures while the men are at work in the fields.

In one village, in the government of Voronez, where there lived about *two thousand* of the *Duehovnee* Christianee, they used on the Sabbath, to meet for worship in the open air, as their assemblies were larger than any house in the neighbourhood could contain.

In that village, it was their custom in going out to the fields to their daily labour, to go in company, singing in concert. Those who lived at the farther extremity of the village, first left their houses, and commencing a hymn, proceeded through the village singing ; other

villagers soon joined them, and they were joined by the rest in succession, as they passed their doors. They then proceeded to their labours in the fields, singing, as they went, the praises of God. In like manner they returned to their homes in the evening, singing songs of praise; and each left the band of choristers as they passed his dwelling. The females, who could not take part in the labours of the field, used likewise, when seated at the doors of their houses spinning, to sing aloud; and sometimes in concert, hymns, and songs of praise.

It is customary with many of the Russian peasantry to assemble in the evening at each other's houses in turns, when the men repair their implements of husbandry, while the women spin, and the youths, of both sexes, play at games of forfeits. In this village the same custom was kept up, with this difference: while the men made their repairs, and the women spun, the youths sang hymns and psalms, and other portions of Scripture in concert with their parents and seniors.

The majority of the villagers were Duehovnee Christianee; and as those who were not of their persuasion did not molest them, they lived in peace, and they appeared to be a very happy community.

All the testimony I have been able to collect, tends to prove that, as a body, "their conversation is as becometh the Gospel of Christ."

The other peasants often say, "Look at these Molokauns! How they love one another! They are *always* filling each other's bags with corn!"

A similar testimony was borne by a governor of Tamboff. He said that no Molokaun living in his government had ever been known to beg: their wants were always supplied by their own people. As another proof of the interest which they took in each other's comfort, he stated, that it was impossible to recover Molokauns who deserted the army. They are supposed to be conveyed from cottage to cottage, and from village to village, but effectually concealed, though concealment is very difficult.

I had a conversation concerning this people with a Russian merchant, who resided in a district in which they are numerous. He said, that he considered them much too religious, and that he did not wish to have anything to do with them; but he bore a willing testimony to their good behaviour, and said, that in every respect they led exemplary lives. A friend who was present, asked, "Why then are they disliked?" He said, "he could not tell; that he could assign no other reason than that they were religious." It was then asked, "Why are they persecuted?" He said, "he supposed that the persecution and annoyance to which they were at that time exposed, had been excited by the priests, in consequence of the Molokauns refusing to treat them with the deference offered by the other peasants."

We have no evidence, that in any body of professing Christians, the conduct of all the members has been uniform and consistent. It need

not then excite surprise to learn, that in this community there have been individuals whose conduct has grieved their brethren.

In the beginning of 1838, one of the *Duehovnee* Christianee, who appeared to be a truly pious man, in conversation with a Christian friend, lamented over some of his fellow-worshippers, whom he described as acting improperly in some particulars, but whom others were unwilling to exclude from their communion, because in many respects their conduct was consistent with their profession: they argued, that the exclusion of such persons from their society would be productive of evil, as the excluded would seek for society as bad as themselves; and that consistency, moreover, would require of them, if they excluded one, to exclude many of their friends. He said, that many of his friends kept the Sabbath as a day of sacred rest, but that others would not, saying, "they cannot, as it is a great market day in Russia." He lamented such conduct, and seemed desirous to learn the opinion of my friend concerning the propriety of accepting invitations to the houses of those who walked disorderly; he also desired to learn his opinion concerning the evidence of repentance upon which such persons should be restored, if excluded from the society.

It is only by the manifestation of the truth that such evils can be remedied; and the following testimony, corroborative of much that has been stated in the preceding pages, will show that the *Duehovnee* Christianee have not been neglectful of this correction for errors of doctrine and practice:—

"In March, 1822," says Dr. Pinkerton, in his work on Russia, "I met with a most interesting spiritual Christian, the minister of one of their assemblies, in St. Petersburg, and had a long conversation with him at the house of a Russian noble. His name was Isaiah. He was a man about sixty years of age in appearance; a simple, bearded peasant, dressed in coarse wide russet garments. I conversed with him for nearly three hours on the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and found him, in general, very sound. His knowledge was taken solely from the word of God, of which he was one of the most powerful quoters I ever conversed with. His views of the faith and practice of a Christian, drawn from this source, were beautifully simple and harmonious. But, like the *Duehobortzee*, he rejected the external ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. He seemed to insist much upon the evidences of a living faith; and that nothing would entitle a person to the name of a Christian, but christianity in practice. As he had no acquaintance with scholastic theology, nor any systematic form of faith, I was astonished at his skill in illustrating one part of Scripture by another, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and the wonderful facility with which he applied the whole force of truth to the regulation of the heart and life. In this poor peasant I saw an illustrious example of the power of the Divine word, under the

blessing of God, to make even the simple, and those who, in respect of human learning, are babes, truly wise. His congregation, he said, consisted of about five hundred souls, who formed a village near Mosdok. They had five elders to labour among them in spiritual things, who are chosen from among themselves, and ordained to their office by the laying on of the hands of the whole church, and prayer. He spoke of their brethren as being very numerous, and scattered over all the provinces of the empire. They were also known under the name Molokani, but were not all equally pure in doctrine and practice. He said, that he had been sent forth by his church for the express purpose of visiting the brethren, and ministering to their spiritual wants by doctrine and conversation. Many of them, he added, were becoming purer in faith and practice. He stated, that the great body of Molokani entertain superstitious ideas respecting 'the kiss of charity,' or form of salutation used among them; that, on saluting each other, they pay a kind of mutual devotional respect, by bowing themselves to the ground, as before the image of God, and the temple in which the Holy Ghost dwells; that they therefore look upon the kiss of charity as one of the most sacred acts. In some provinces, he said, he had found them denying the last judgment, saying, that it was already come, and the second advent of Christ already past: it was one object of his travels to purify them of these errors; but he regretted that some of their congregations had unworthy teachers. In his views of the invocation of saints, the use of images, prayers for the dead, &c., he held pure protestant principles. He said, that in public worship they use no books but the Bible. They practise no vows of celibacy; he himself had a wife and children at home; their ritual, he said, consists chiefly of extemporary prayer, and exposition of the Scriptures in a familiar and easy manner by their ministers."—*Pinkerton's Russia*, 185—187.

THE APOSTLESHIP OF MATTHIAS DEFENDED, IN REPLY TO G. P.

EVERY one who has an opinion and publishes it, must calculate on having it examined. If he does not, he is very foolish. And he who acts the part of an examiner of opinions must expect to be examined in turn himself: this is fair, equitable, right. Every Christian, and especially every Christian minister, should be prepared to encourage free discussion with a view to the eliciting of truth. Without free, calm, and candid discussion, much truth may lie concealed, and much error may pass current for the beauties of Divine revelation. I therefore welcome G. P., who, I know, is a brother in the Gospel ministry, to the examination of the views I have advanced respecting the

Apostleship of Matthias, assured he will not take it amiss if I very freely examine his positions, and endeavour to show that they neither meet my arguments, nor are based on correct views of the transaction to which this discussion relates.

I. G. P. at the very outset, has fallen into a misconception of a portion of my argument. The quotations from the Syriac and the Vulgate do not relate, as G. P. asserts, to the "mode of voting" observed in the election of Matthias. They were adduced to confirm the accuracy of our version in translating the Greek word *συγκατηριθίσθη* by *was numbered*. No stress was laid on the mode of voting observed, for none could be laid on it. It cannot affect the question one way or the other. But considerable stress is laid, and ought to be laid, on the fact that Matthias *was numbered* with the eleven Apostles. Dr. Bloomfield says that *συγκατηριθίσθη* properly signifies to choose by common suffrages, and then to number with or into. Dr. Robinson says that "etymologically" it might also here signify to be allotted or voted with the Apostles, but assigns to it the same meaning that our common version does. And this *must* be the meaning here, first, because the selection of one out of the two candidates was left to God, to be decided by lot. When the "lot fell on Matthias" all voting was at an end; indeed, before this—it was at an end, when the decision was left to God—"Lord, show whether of these twain thou hast chosen." This they expected to be shown by the lot. When therefore the lot fell on Matthias, they regarded him as *chosen by God* to be an Apostle in the place of Judas. To say then, after this, that he was *voted* or *allotted* with the eleven Apostles, would be pure tautology,—hence *numbered* is the correct version. Secondly, the Peschito Syriac and the Vulgate confirm this version. But G. P. admits he "was numbered with the apostles." He adds, however, "whether on *Divine* authority is the question we now propose to consider." Why this is the very question I. J. had considered; and this is the very question, here settled by Divine authority. I. J. has always considered that the Book of the *Acts* was written, like all other Scriptures, by *Divine inspiration*. He has always thought the *facts* of Scripture are as really recorded by the theopneustic influence as the doctrines of Scripture are taught. If so then, it is an inspired statement, a Divinely recorded fact, that Matthias was "numbered with the eleven Apostles." Does G. P. imagine that the Holy Spirit would state, at least thirty years after the election took place, that he was numbered with the Apostles, if it were true, that the election was *null* and *void*, the fruit of the *rashness* of the "hasty, quick, and zealous Peter?" The Holy Spirit does not say that he was so numbered by the Apostles themselves only, or that he was so numbered merely for a time, but absolutely that he was numbered with the eleven Apostles. And the same infallible Teacher tells us, incidentally, in the next chapter, and after the full

out-pouring of the Spirit, that "Peter stood up with the eleven," which not only gives additional strength to the argument we have been urging, but also furnishes an independent argument by itself, that Matthias was an Apostle. The eleven, besides Peter, can only be made out by reckoning Matthias, who, we are told before, was numbered with the eleven. Yet the Holy Spirit tells us there were eleven beside Peter.

2. But I need not readduce the arguments advanced in my former paper, all of which, strange to say, G. P. has left entirely unnoticed, and, of course, unanswered. G. P.'s first position is that Matthias "was not called to be an Apostle by our Lord himself." I suppose he means by our Lord *personally*. If this be his meaning, his position is granted. But granting the correctness of the position itself, does not at all admit its relevancy to the point at issue, much less its conclusiveness. To assert that he was not so called, is to assert what all know. But was such a call *necessary* to the constitution of an Apostle? This is what G. P. should have proved; but he has not even attempted it. He says indeed, that all the other Apostles were so called. That however proves nothing, for he might as well have affirmed that all other Apostles were called by Christ to the apostleship *while he was on earth*, and on the ground of this have maintained that Paul was not an Apostle. To have been called by Christ was necessary, but whether during his abode on earth or after; personally or by the infallible direction of his Spirit, seems to be altogether an accidental circumstance in relation to the apostolic office. If to have been *personally* called by Christ were necessary, let G. P. produce the text or texts where this is indicated. I fancy this cannot be done. Paul frequently refers to his own apostleship, and asserts that he was an Apostle, not of *human* creation, but Divine—deriving his authority from God, and not from man; but the circumstance on which he lays most stress is, that he had *seen* the Lord, (1 Cor. ix. 1; xv. 8.) And this along with miraculous gifts, seems to have been the *main* requisite for apostleship (Acts i. 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; x. 41; xiii. 30, 31; xxii. 14, 15; xxvi. 16; v. 32.)

3. The second position G. P. lays down is this, that "Peter's reasoning on this occasion, namely, the election of Matthias, was inconclusive." So G. P. may think; others however may think differently. But how does he make out Peter to be a bad logician? Wherein is our apostle's false logic apparent? Had the Apostles, he says, received a Divine intimation that one should be elected in the room of Judas, Peter would no doubt, have mentioned it on the occasion; but that having no such intimation he proceeds to reason. I trust I shall be able to prove Peter to be a better and more logical reasoner than G. P.; nor should my opponent on this question be displeased if I succeed. He begs the whole question, when he assumes that Peter had no Divine intimation in the matter. But "he would no doubt have mentioned it if he had." I simply ask G. P., how do you know that he would? Do the

Apostles whenever they utter any truth, or direct to any line of conduct, always make sure to tell every body that they are inspired? No, they do not. They never do it unless when their inspiration is called in question. The Apostles being really inspired and vested with infallible authority, never, like modern Puseyistic or Romish pretenders to authority, talk about it, hold it up, make much of it; they had no occasion to do so: the evidences of their Divine mission were too conclusive to need the feeble proof of words.

But Peter's *bad* logic! We must be on our guard against that. The first instance of it is this,—“He quotes the prophecy respecting Judas, ‘His bishopric let another take;’ and concludes, therefore, we must fulfil it by choosing another apostle.” Let this mode of stating the case, though not the most respectful to Peter, stand; yet still the false logic is not appearing. A close and candid inquirer will naturally ask, did Peter and his brethren act under Divine guidance? If so, which remains to be disproved, where is the bad reasoning?

The second, and only other instance adduced of Peter's illogicality, is this:—Peter declares, that one of those who had associated with them from the beginning, “*must*” be ordained to be a witness of the resurrection of Christ; but that our Lord himself, when about to choose an apostle, selected him out of the “camp of the enemy.” “Our Lord, then,” says G. P., “did not think as Peter, and his conduct shows the inconclusive character of Peter's reasoning.” Really my respected opponent must have very acute perception to discern here any contrariety of judgment between Peter and his Lord. Where is the contradiction? Peter says, that one of their associates must be chosen to be a witness of the Lord's resurrection; and the Lord himself, in a *different* case, selected a man to be an apostle from a very different class of individuals—from the “enemy's camp.” Now what hinders but that Peter was right in his view respecting the election of such an individual as he describes; while the Saviour selects *another* apostle from an altogether different quarter? I can see nothing. If our Lord had set aside the election of Matthias, and substituted Paul in his stead, *then* G. P. might speak of our Lord thinking differently from Peter: but this he did not do; and this G. P., although it was necessary to make good his point, has not attempted to prove. Peter's logic, then, remains unimpeached; and it is G. P.'s which suffers. Never was there exhibited a more complete instance of the *non sequitur*, than this attempt to impeach the accuracy of Peter's reasoning.

If G. P. could make out that Paul was the successor of Judas, he would do something to purpose; but this cannot be done. Paul was successor to none; he was an extraordinary apostle, greater than any of the rest, or them all put together. He was selected especially to be *the* apostle of the Gentiles, and that in his case might be presented an overwhelming proof of the Divinity of the Christian religion, as

well as a demonstration of the long-suffering and mercy of God, to all who should hereafter believe on him unto life everlasting.

4. G. P. asserts that "the mode of procedure in the election of an apostle, on this occasion, is unsatisfactory." Well, what is it which is so "unsatisfactory?" First, they appointed two, which "was a very difficult task," and they did so without making "a special appeal to Heaven." But I cannot see the great difficulty of which G. P. speaks. I can conceive of nothing more simple, or more free from difficulty, than the selection of two possessing the qualifications specified by Peter. The qualifications are simply these;—an intimate acquaintance with the Lord prior to his death, and a similar knowledge of him after his resurrection. And as to a "special appeal to Heaven," what avails the reference to that, since the whole company had been previously persevering harmoniously in prayer to God? Ἦσαν προσκαρτεροῦντες ὁμοθυμαδὸν τῇ προσευχῇ. Besides, a "special appeal to Heaven" in such a case, so simple, so obvious, was not needed. But to make a choice between the two, was difficult indeed, could be decided by none but God, and, therefore, to him it was committed.

"Now if the giving forth of lots," says G. P. "preceded by prayer, was so certain a mode of procedure, where was the necessity of appointing, first of all, two individuals, then resorting to prayer and the use of the lot, to ascertain which of the two was to be numbered with the Apostles?" Supposing we could not tell the use, what would follow? Is it that there was no use? By no means. We must never so far presume on our wisdom or folly, as to imagine that there is no use in a thing because we don't see it; much less should we dare to question or impeach the wisdom of any procedure of the Apostles of our Lord, simply because we cannot perceive its use. But no mystery hangs over the present transaction; it is all plain and obvious. The Apostles, in their conduct on this occasion, recognise a *great principle* frequently illustrated in sacred history, namely, that an extraordinary Divine interposition is never to be expected where human agency or human wisdom is sufficient, is all that is necessary. In the selection of the two no such interposition was required; in the choice between them it was. But why was the lot not resorted to at first, without two being selected? Because the latter was the simpler method.*

Finally, there is not, as G. P. asserts, "a strong contrast" between the conduct of our Lord before choosing Apostles, and the present "procedure." There is, on the contrary, a very strong resemblance. There was nothing of precipitancy here. The "hasty, quick, and zealous Peter," did not rush without prayer into such a solemn engagement. Nor were there only a "few minutes' " prayer, as my opponent asserts. As we have seen, the whole transaction was preceded by

* A remarkable instance of appeal to the lot, occurs 1 Sam. xiv. 40, &c.

persevering united prayer. G. P. seems not to have considered the subject with sufficient care. If he had, he would not have made some of the statements he has, nor have accused the Apostles and brethren of *prayerlessness* on the important occasion which is the subject of reference. They were not prayerless; they were followers of their Divine Master as truly in their devotional habits as in other respects.

A word or two more, and I will close. G. P.'s article consists of difficulties thrown out, rather than of arguments advanced, against the claims of Matthias. Difficulties are very distinct from arguments; this ought not to be forgotten. Many difficulties may attach to a certain view which, nevertheless, is so well sustained by arguments as to command the ready assent of every impartial inquirer. There is no subject without its difficulties; no theory or doctrine against which difficulties may not be urged. It may be well to notice these and remove them, if possible. But it is not *necessary* to do this. Full conviction respecting a point does not require it. If, therefore, the difficulties suggested by G. P. on the present question could not be so easily removed as they are, still the apostleship of Matthias, sustained as it is by such satisfactory evidence, would remain in all its integrity.

Waterford.

I. J.

"TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU."

Our lamented friend, the Rev. Dr. Fletcher, was at Ramsgate, in August, 1837, and heard his son, the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, of Hanley, preach at the Independent Chapel there, from Matthew xi. 29. In the evening, he was requested to contribute an article to the album of a friend, when he penned the following happy lines:—

Oh, "take my yoke," the bless'd Redeemer cries,
 Divine compassion beaming in his eyes:
 Learn thou of me,—my teaching shall impart
 Truth to thy *mind*, and comfort to thy *heart*.
 Lord! I surrender both to thy control,—
 Reign thou supreme possessor of my soul.
 Sweet is the love that claims thee as my own,
 And soft the yoke that binds me to thy throne.
 On earth, thy service shall my glory be;
 In heaven, thy presence my felicity.

REVIEWS.

1. *A Friendly Epistle to that learned body of Dissenting Ministers calling themselves the London Congregational Board. By a Dissenting Minister.* 8vo. pp. 70. London: Effingham Wilson, 1843.
2. *The Congregational Ministry, sustained by a Divine and an adequate Human Sanction. Adopted at the Adjourned Meeting of the Twelfth Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, held in Liverpool, October, 1842.* 12mo. pp. 36. London: Jackson & Walford.

As "the Congregational Board" enjoys the respect and confidence of the Independent churches in the metropolis and throughout the land, so it is probable that an "Epistle" addressed to its members by "A Dissenting Minister," may excite the curiosity of many connected with our denomination respecting its contents.

It is plain, from the title-page, that it was the intention of its author to conceal under general terms the topics on which he discourses, and thus to leave "scope and verge enough" for conjecture, both as to himself and his theme.

"By a Dissenting Minister!" exclaimed a reader of the publisher's advertisement. "Why a Unitarian may assume that title:—Effingham Wilson too is the publisher;—and there is a sneer concealed under the phrase 'that learned body,' very like one of their amiable flings! It is probable, then, that this pamphlet may be a forlorn attempt to revive their hopeless controversy against the catholic doctrines which our ministers teach in common with all the orthodox in Christendom."

"The writer may be a Baptist brother," rejoined a second, "whose zeal against infant sprinkling is so fervid that 'many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it,' and who is therefore resolved from behind the curtain of a *friendly* epistle to assail us again, and scatter his fiery missiles amongst our churches." "Or, to guess again," said a third friend, "this dissenting minister may be some reverend presbyter who has undertaken to persuade the Congregational brethren to accomplish certain predictions that have been frequently repeated of late, that Independent ministers, tired of the tyranny of the people, will, without delay, adopt the Presbyterian platform of church government!" The scanty knowledge supplied by the title, and the curiosity it awakened, led one of these parties immediately to buy this *eighteen-penny* pamphlet, in order that the enigma might be solved. Now to prevent our readers the trouble and expense of such a purchase, we give thus early an article on a pamphlet, which, apart from the high

character of the body addressed, is not worth the trouble of the briefest notice.

First, then, for the author, "A Dissenting Minister." "I have never," says he, "received 'a regular theological education' at any academy."

"I am not a Baptist. I am not anything by way of human distinction; I never mean to ask of what particular persuasion any man is, I only inquire if he preaches Jesus Christ, and him crucified: such a man is my friend, whether he be an Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, or Wesleyan, whether he be 'regularly educated and regularly ordained' or not; but if there be anything about a man savouring of Antinomianism, I have nothing in common with him, I have no sympathy with him, because I know that such a man does not, can not, preach the Gospel."—p. 68.

As to his pamphlet the writer says, "*Literary style has not at all been attempted, nor has any particular method been pursued; but circumstances, just as they occurred to my mind, have been written down, without any regard to order.*" This is pretty well for one who undertakes to lecture others on the want of logic in their sermons. Our readers will conclude, after such an announcement, that "all and sundry" matters are to be found in this rambling, pointless, and uncharitable epistle; and they must excuse our attempting to notice all his impertinences. A few instances must suffice. The writer is evidently a lay preacher, who, puffed up with pride and stung with envy, because he, and persons of his class, are not invited to occupy the pulpits and to conduct the chief services of our principal chapels, has thought fit to print all the impotent slander about the ministers of London, which his own ill-will, and the whisperings and backbitings of other worthies, could supply. The reader may judge of the temper of the man by the title he employs to address the associated ministers,—*"My lords over God's heritage;"* and, with equal courtesy, he proceeds to say, *"You are a club,—a clique,—a combination—a sort of trade society."*—*"A gang of men in London who crush whom you will, and raise whom you like."*—*"Precious calves."*—*"Those few among you who have any brains,"* &c. Individual ministers are spoken of as *"a keen-eyed seer—a wondrous judge of preachers—a great high-priest of the Independent profession—a silly man—a booby—this race-running ragamuffin,"* &c. Now, we submit that *"A Dissenting Minister"* who can condescend to use such language of other preachers of the Gospel, has fairly put himself out of court, and has no claim to be treated as a Christian gentleman. Still, as he gives expression to the ignorant mistakes and prejudices of others, especially of those who have been tampered with by the Plymouth fraternity, we shall, with as much calmness as possible, notice a few of the blunders into which he has fallen, and select some extracts from the second publication before us, that we think fairly meet the positions he attempts to occupy:

The first matter of complaint is, that the parties he has addressed are "not a *board*, (i.e.) not a *delegated body*." "May it not with fairness be asked, who *constituted* you a *board*? Did your churches? Did they *send* you, *appoint* you, or *request* that you would become a kind of religious *parliament* to *represent* them?" The reader will perceive that our author would give a new meaning to the word "board," which Dr. Johnson defines to be "An assembly seated at a table;" and the manner in which it is constituted, therefore, in no way interferes with the right use of the word. As the Congregational ministers of London have for well-nigh a century and a quarter, thus met at a table, we submit that they are quite at liberty to call themselves "the Congregational Board," without being fairly subjected to reproach. It is usual with them to speak in their own names, and on their own responsibility. This is done also, not only by the episcopal clergy of the metropolis, but by the Baptist and Presbyterian ministers, who, with the Congregational brethren, form "The General Body" of Dissenting ministers, that for more than one hundred and fifty years have been accustomed to address the sovereign and the parliament in their own names only, and not in that of their churches. Still we wish most sincerely to see an association of the Congregational ministers and churches formed for London, by which much good might be done, and much of the evil which this pamphlet reveals might be prevented.

But what harm hath the Board done? Listen to our letter-writer:—

"Long—very long, have you deserved to be brought before the public, and exposed to contempt for the dispositions you exhibit, the assumed authority which you exercise. You are well known, especially in the country, as the gang of men in London, who crush whom you will, and raise whom you like; but I trust that your reign will be short, and that, independently of your baneful influence, the all-conquering God will cause his churches to spiritually flourish, notwithstanding the unhallowed measures which you seem determined to pursue.

"It is too plain, that the ministers of religion in these days must be men of your calling, not of God's calling; that they must be ground in your mill, and pass through your sieve, or they are not considered by you as qualified for the work: in other words, God is not a teacher that pleases you: for if a man possess both learning and talent, and has not spent a few years in one of your theological academies, (where, alas! it is too generally the case that young men are taught to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, themselves occupying that place in their minds which ought to be entirely devoted to the sacred duties they have in prospect,) such a man is to have no more countenance than will keep him in the lower ranks of the ministry. He must only be allowed to preach occasionally, and be used as a mere lackey by you. You will ask him on an emergency to give the address at one of your week-evening prayer-meetings, *as they are called*, or he may be sent occasionally to an obscure village to preach, where, in consequence either of the high-church influence, the previous rank poison of Antinomianism, or the proselyting spirit of Wesleyanism, he is sure to have but few to hear him, and of that few, several mere spies out of the extreme classes, who will be sure to report ill of his discourse.

"Now, in just such circumstances as I have described, I have heard it said by

more than one of our Independent LORD BISHOPS, 'You see the people don't like him; they will not go to hear him, and it's of no use sending him to preach the people away.'—pp. 7, 8.

- The *animus* of this extract requires no comment, but the assumed facts must not be passed over in silence. On reading this mendacious passage, a stranger would suppose that the Board is indeed what our writer calls it, "a combination" to exclude from the ministry any man who has not been trained in one of our seminaries, and to discourage as much as possible the gifted men who may be found in our churches. The fact is, that at the time he wrote it there were more than *twenty* members of that Board, and some of them alike eminent for talent and influence, who were never educated in any of our colleges, and who, by their piety, "learning, and talent" alone, have obtained not only the suffrages of their people, but also the respect and confidence of their brethren, who cheerfully engaged in their ordination, and unanimously voted for their admission amongst them.

The Board, like every other voluntary association, has a right to determine who shall be eligible for membership. Their rule is as follows :—

"Any minister wishing to be admitted to this Board, shall be recommended in writing at a monthly meeting by at least five of its members, who shall declare on their own personal knowledge that he does sustain or has sustained the pastoral office in some of our churches, or is an assistant to a pastor in or about the metropolis; or that he is or has been officially connected with some religious or collegiate institution, established within its bounds; and if, at the succeeding monthly meeting, such recommendation be sustained by the presence of a majority of those by whom he has been nominated, and be approved by three-fourths of the members present, he shall be received as a member of this Board."

This then is the "authority assumed" that gentlemen will choose their company—this the "disposition" exhibited, that no man calling himself a pastor of an Independent church who cannot find five other ministers to give him a good character, shall be received into its fellowship. Is it for this that the Board is threatened with the contempt of the public, and the avenging power of "the all-conquering God?"

The writer obviously smarts under the fact, that in the constitution of the Board there is no provision made for the reception of lay preachers; and he dreams that the time of its members is occupied in contriving how they can most successfully prevent the exercise of their ministerial gifts. He is altogether in error: it is a topic that is not named amongst them, because it is regarded as a question that pertains to the church to which the gifted brother belongs—and not, in the first instance, to the associated ministers. Let "Mr. Apollos" commend himself to the fellow-Christians with whom he stands in church connexion as a man having gifts in his head, grace in his heart, and holi-

ness in his life,—as a man able and willing “to spend and be spent” in the service of his Master, and they cannot, they dare not, they wish not to put “his light under a bushel.” They will recognise his gifts, and encourage him to preach. The confidence they repose in him will inspire confidence in the minds of other churches. He will soon become known as a man having a religious character, and a religious home. Not like our author, who, when not engaged in preaching himself, desecrates the Lord’s-day by wandering about London to hear and criticise “the schoolmen.”* No; the man who is accepted by our churches has a pastor and brethren with whom he delights to go “up to the house of God in company;” though gifted to preach, he is still patient to hear, and is still thankful to be taught, it may be, by that revered minister who first led him to Christ. This “Dissenting Minister” is manifestly ignorant of the sentiments of the Independent churches. He acknowledges there “are a few” amongst the London ministers “who have some brains,” and he has perception enough to include our excellent brother, the Rev. Algernon Wells, of Clapton, in that select class. What *he* has penned, may then obtain some attention; and we will, therefore, enrich our pages with some extracts from an invaluable tract, the title of which is at the head of this article, written by that gentleman, and adopted at a large meeting of the ministers and lay brethren of the Congregational Union, at Liverpool, in October last. It is No. X. of The Union Tract Series, and deserves to be studied by all the members of that body.

“When Christian churches and assemblies are duly ordered, some men are appointed and ordained to minister therein. To preach and teach is thus made their office, their work. On that work and office others may not irregularly, and without due sanction intrude. This we hold. But when God hath given to any Christian man, not by church order placed in the Gospel ministry, knowledge, ability, and desire to declare his truth—and hath placed him where Gospel preaching is greatly needed, yet cannot in regular order be had—shall we forbid him to preach the glorious Gospel? We forbid him not. Let him follow the primitive example of the Christians dispersed by the first storm of persecution that fell on the church at Jerusalem. Order is not by us, maintained to smother Gospel truth, or to extinguish Christian rights. *Reason, experience, Scripture, unite to show that there are rights and duties in every Christian man prior to all order, and superior to all order.* These may be dormant while order holds its proper course, and produces its proper benefits; but without the exercise of them, truth can never be spread where it is unknown, or be recovered where it has been lost. *Amidst an ignorant population, or a corrupt church,* let any voice speak that can declare salvation, or vindicate truth. It shall be a light thing with us that in such cases order is not observed. Perhaps it is impossible it should be. It is certain that successful truth will soon become the parent of all necessary and valid order.

“We approve and desire an educated ministry. We are at cost and labour to secure that inestimable advantage. The great majority of our ministers enter on

* Page 38.

their work through the medium of an appropriate education. Therefore, when setting forth the methods by which we sustain the order of our ministry, we must state them in connexion with our plans of education. *But our churches are not bound invariably, and in every instance, to the ministry of brethren educated in our colleges. They are open to employ approved character and gifts, where the advantages of such an education cannot be secured, and brethren under such circumstances can receive and exercise among us, an orderly and recognised ministry. So neither does our polity reject the labours, in preaching the Gospel, of brethren not in the ministerial office.* The order of the ministry, and the benefits of that order, are not destroyed, because some are preachers who are not ministers. The world, the church, the ministry itself, need the zealous labours of all who can aid to diffuse the truth of God and to save the souls of men. *We deem the order of the ministry to be in excess, and in abuse, when to it must be sacrificed all gifts, all activities not within its range—when no man may 'say to his neighbour, Know the Lord,' if he belong not to an exclusive order of teachers.*

"It may be more difficult, it cannot be less necessary, to vindicate our own just and moderate claims to a *true* ministry, than to refute the exaggerated claims of others to an *exclusive* ministry. For we, too, believe there is by Divine institution a ministry in the Christian church. If we would not unduly *exalt*, neither would we *destroy* the ministerial office. The teachers, and the taught—Gal. vi. 6; the shepherds, and the flock—1 Peter v. 1—4; the elders, and the brotherhood—1 Thess. v. 12, 13; the churches, and their bishops and deacons—Phil. i. 1, are classes distinctly recognised in the authoritative teachings of Christ and his apostles. These distinctions we would not make void, but establish. It is doubtful whether the Christian church could long exist,—it is certain it could not flourish and extend, if deprived of its ministry.—Eph. iv. 11, 12; 2 Tim. ii. 2.

"Therefore, from their very origin to this day, the Independent churches have maintained, as of Divine appointment, an orderly eldership—pastors and teachers for the spiritual office, and deacons for the secular. They have always ordained their ministers as a practice apostolic and scriptural. They have never held public ministrations in their assemblies to be common to all and open to every one indiscriminately. Neither their principles nor their practices have involved them in confusion. They have stood for liberty, but they have never trampled upon order.

"We distinguish the human from the Divine sanction of the Christian ministry. A ministry is *authorised*, because it has the sanction of CHRIST; *orderly*, because it has that of a CHURCH. These sanctions are not only distinguishable, but separable. They are often in fact found apart: in some, the human without the Divine: in others, the Divine without the human. In happier instances they are combined, constituting together a truly apostolical ministry, in whatever community it may be found. Both are important, but how unequally so! The human sanction is excellent for order, the Divine is essential for validity in the Christian ministry. We *magnify* the Divine sanction, but we do not *depreciate* the human.

"We hold that ministry to be orderly which has the sanction of the church, that is, of the Christian people among whom the sacred office is sustained and exercised. We hold that an orderly entrance on the ministry, or on preparatory studies for the sacred office, when a man is sanctioned in the step by the pastor and church with which he is in fellowship. We do not hold, that every man's own claims should be held as proof that he has a ministry from Christ. Order is the law of the Great Master. Humility is the sure mark of his servants. Co-operation and mutual support are the strength of all whom he employs. Were we to dwell on the Divine sanction without reference to the human, we might be wrecked in fanaticism. Were we to exalt the human above the Divine, we might fall under tyranny. Order is for

the sake of the validity—to discern it, to attest it. When the office is duly constituted the church gives its sanction, because it thinks God has already given his; it sanctions that man as a minister whom it judges to have been previously made one by God; it receives from him the declaration, that he believes himself called to take the office on him; and the sanction which it then gives, amounts to a declaration that he also believes such to be the fact.”—pp. 16—18, 20, 21.

When he reads these enlightened expositions of the scriptural opinions and practices of our pastors respecting the ministry, our letter-writer will blush, if he be not past shame, for the slanders he has published against them.

We cannot follow the idle gossip and witless twaddle which our would-be “regular” dissenting minister has published, after the laborious collection of nearly twenty years;* but as he glories in having told his mind, we shall in conclusion faithfully express our own. There are passages in his pamphlet which indicate a godly concern for the honour of Christ and the salvation of men—strangely at variance with its general tendency. The author, in the preface, confesses that “it is next to impossible to write what he has written, and in the way he has written it, without at times entertaining feelings which it would have been better could they have been avoided.” We, therefore, will not resent, as they deserve, his injurious, and, we must add, unjust statements; but assure him that our judgment is, that this epistle is far better adapted to gratify the infidel and the scoffer than to benefit the parties he wishes to reform. And, therefore, if the habit of treating with levity sacred and solemn themes, has not already blighted and withered in his soul, the fruit of the Spirit, we would recommend him to take this pamphlet to his closet, and there on his knees before God to ask himself whether he ought not to be humbled and confounded for so lamentable a violation of the laws of meekness, truth, and charity!

Astronomy and Scripture; or some illustrations of that science and of the Solar, Lunar, Stellar, and Terrestrial Phenomena of Holy Writ.
By the Rev. T. Milner, M.A. London: J. Snow. 1843. 12mo.
pp. 394.

WE have frequently taken occasion to recommend to the younger portion of our readers, the attentive perusal of various excellent books,

* *Ex. gra.*—“On one occasion, I have been told.” “Some few years ago.” “This brings to mind, a tale which was related to me.” “I could not help thinking of one or two old stories which I had heard.” “Some sixteen or seventeen years ago.” “Another short specimen of preaching some fourteen or fifteen years ago.” “I heard a tale a long time ago.”

on the connexion of science with revelation, and on the study of the material creation in its various departments. It has afforded us great pleasure, to speak to our friends of the value of those labours, which have been devoted to such studies by Wiseman, Smith, Dick, Redford, Duncan, Mudie, and many others; and we are happy now to be able to recommend another volume for the libraries of that interesting class for whom it has been prepared. Mr. Milner states that,

"The object of this volume is to illustrate the relation between the chief facts of Astronomy, and the general testimony of Scripture, with a view to promote the interests of religion and science. It is written popularly, being intended for the use of those classes of young persons who revere the word of God, and seek an acquaintance with His works."

Keeping this object in view, he presents to his readers a very interesting collection of astronomical facts, and details the various ways in which those facts were discovered.

Before opening this or any volume which professes to examine the facts of a science in connexion with inspired Scripture, it is necessary that the object of the writer should be properly understood. That object is not to teach the science which may be brought under review, but to select from it such portions as may come into contact with any part of revealed truth, for the purpose of showing the harmony that exists between them. If the design of the writer be not clearly understood, he may be very foolishly censured for not giving a full and comprehensive treatise, or presenting some new facts, while at the same time it was no part of his plan to do the one or the other. We have heard of the writer of some three-penny pamphlet, who in this way erected himself into the office of censor on Dr. Chalmers, because his astronomical discourses conveyed but little astronomical science, while it was not the design of Dr. Chalmers to do more than show that the leading and well-known facts of astronomy were not contradictory to revelation. If it should therefore be objected to the volume before us, that it does not convey any new facts, it will be sufficient to reply that it was not the writer's design to do so, that design being to show the harmony of Scripture with the sublime science of which he treats, and to bring its facts to the illustration of the various passages in which allusion is made to them: in that design, he has in our opinion succeeded to admiration. But our readers shall judge for themselves.

We have been much pleased with the light which the following passage throws on the controversy of Elijah with the priests of Baal :—

"We may trace the same progression from bad to worse, in the rites, as well as in the objects of the ancient idolatry. From the simple act of veneration mentioned by Job, there appears to have been a corresponding transition to grosser usages, as the human mind came under the dominion of more earthly and debasing forms of super-

stitution. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of the Jews 'offering cakes to the queen of heaven.' This was at an era when the celestial orbs were served through the medium of graven images, and was a wide remove from the salutation with the hand and the lips, of the moon 'walking in brightness.' Then, as a further progress, came the offering of animal and human victims, with the infliction of self-torture. The priests of Baal offered the sacrifice of a bullock to him on Carmel, placing it on an altar upon which fagots were piled, and there they cried aloud, and cut themselves with knives and lancets, to induce him to be propitious, and assert his divinity by consuming the sacrifice with fire.

"The symbolic character of Baal, as an emblem of the sun, is the true key to the interesting transaction on Mount Carmel. The sun attained his meridian splendour, but 'there was no voice, nor any that answered:' the sacrifice remained unconsumed. Adoring in Baal the great orb of day, here was a visible demonstration afforded to the people of the inefficiency of the object of their confidence and trust. At the hour of noon, when the solar rays are most intense, the vows and protestations of his worshipers appear to have been most vehement; for, if success were not attained then, it was less likely afterwards. The fagots upon the altar, which were not ignited by the fervour of the meridian sun, they could not expect to be enkindled by his evening beams. It is particularly noted that 'at noon Elijah mocked them.' Their defeat was now certain. The sun was undeified to their gaze—the wood was unconsumed, and thenceforth the strength of his rays must decline. Behind the heights of Carmel, and the blue billows of the Mediterranean, he descended without giving the required attestation of his divinity. The shades of evening began to gather over the scene of sacrifice. Then, at the bidding of the prophet, the fire came down, which the fanatical idolators were compelled to refer to the Being he invoked, the Lord who made heaven and earth!

"The wisdom of Elijah is apparent in this transaction, in delaying the vindication of the aspersed honour of Jehovah, and the display of his own Divine authority, until the 'time of the evening sacrifice.' However anxious he might be to convince the idolators of their error, and to assert the claims of the God of Abraham to exclusive deity, it was not the part of prudence to attempt it sooner. Had he proceeded to sacrifice, and to bring down the supernatural fire before the sun set, the people might have hailed it as the gift of their solar deity, have still magnified Baal, and have only honoured Elijah as standing higher in his favour than his established priesthood. But as this took place after the sun had disappeared, the demonstration was complete, that the light of heaven was but a powerless instrument in itself, and that the God of the prophet was the 'blessed and only Potentate.'"—pp. 24—26.

We are glad to have the opportunity of transferring to our pages, the views, given by Mr. Milner, on the prolongation of the day at the command of Joshua:—

"The physical effect produced may thus be stated. The day was wearing away. The sun was declining in the western heavens. The moon was visible in her orbit. The ordinary hour was approaching, when the shadows of evening and night wrapped the world in darkness. But by supernatural means the period was deferred. The sun appeared stationary in the sky, and the light of day continued long beyond its natural term of duration, affording opportunity to Israel to finish the overthrow of their enemies. The moral design of the miracle was to vindicate the superintending providence of God, under whose direction Joshua acted; and to refute an idolatry which opposed his supremacy, by the defeat of his votaries, in the presence of their idol. The sun was one of the objects of Amorite worship; and an appearance of the luminary above the horizon, long after the time of his ordinary setting, while his

worshippers were destroyed, was a practical proof of his inefficiency to them, and subordination to the God of Israel.

"A Divine volition would only be necessary, to stay the moon in her orbit, and to stop the diurnal revolution of the globe, when the phenomena of the sun and the moon standing still, would be presented to the senses of men. We may speculate upon the naturally fatal consequences following such a suspension of the laws of motion affecting the earth with an increased temperature, flinging out the waters from their basins, and producing disturbances in the general system of the universe; but we ought reverently to remember the 'mighty hand of God,' to which, 'all things are possible.' We are not, however, informed as to the mode of operation. We are not in circumstances to decide upon that point. Nevertheless, without presumption, we may refer to a class of analogous phenomena, in relation to it.

"From the refractive power of the atmosphere, the following effects result. The atmosphere being the densest at the horizon, the refraction is there the greatest. Hence the moon appears much larger to us in the horizon, than in the zenith, though really more distant from us by the entire semidiameter of the earth, and often distinctly exhibits an elliptical form, whence the phenomenon of the horizontal moon. Both these appearances are also true of the sun, though not so open to observation, owing to his greater splendour. The average amount of the horizontal refraction being equal to about the apparent diameter of the sun and moon, it follows, that when the sun's lower limb appears morning and evening just to rest on the horizon, his entire body is actually below it, and would be completely invisible but for the refraction of his rays. Owing to refraction, therefore, the sun's stay is daily prolonged in the heavens. His orb appears above the horizon in the western sky, when really beneath it. The natural day is lengthened out—an effect precisely similar in its nature to that which the miracle involved, in an extraordinary degree, in the time of Joshua.

"The candid reader will not mistake the purport and design of these remarks. They are simply meant to relieve him of some difficulty, which many thoughtful minds have felt, in conceiving of the stupendous occurrence at Gibeon. They point us to analogous phenomena, transpiring upon a lesser scale, the product of agencies now in operation. Nothing is affirmed or insinuated in the sacred narrative as to the means employed. Nor are the foregoing observations intended to affirm or insinuate anything, upon a point with reference to which we are confessedly in the dark. They are merely advanced to convey the fact, that a similar effect, though in a far feeblar degree, is daily produced by the common refractive power of the atmosphere; and that the cause operating intensely, the effect would be proportionably intense. It would not detract from the glory of the event, or infringe upon its miraculous character in the least, had we certain knowledge, that by giving increased refractive power to the atmosphere, the image of the sun was maintained above the horizon long after the actual body of the luminary had disappeared. This would as much require and evidence the will, control, and power of God, as stopping the revolution of the earth upon its axis, and commanding it to rest upon its poles."—pp. 141—144.

We have omitted several remarkable cases of refraction, for which we must refer to the volume.

The remarks on the sun-dial of AHAZ, the whole of which we should be glad to copy, proceed on the principle assumed in the preceding observations. We must be satisfied with an extract:—

"In the prophecy of Isaiah, the expression employed is, 'so the sun returned ten

degrees.* This is popular language, like that of the sun's rising and setting. It describes the appearance presented to the eye. The miracle consisted in the sun's apparent place in the heavens being altered—in his appearing to have retraced his course to the horizon ten degrees backward towards the zenith—causing a corresponding change in the shadow on the dial. There is no necessity for supposing the earth's diurnal motion to have been affected, and positive retrogradation on its axis to have taken place, in order to produce the effect produced. Increasing the density of the atmosphere, so as to cause an extraordinary refraction of the solar rays, would be sufficient for the purpose; and it is more congruous with the wisdom and perfections of God, to employ simple means to accomplish his will, rather than those that are complex. To give to Hezekiah and his people an assurance of the care of Providence, by a visible demonstration of power, was the object in view; and as this might be effected by causes that would operate locally, it is reasonable to suppose them to be employed, in preference to one which would have affected the whole mass of the globe. Singular effects have resulted from rapid changes in the constitution of the atmosphere, similar to the occurrence witnessed by the Jewish monarch. Romauld, prior of the cloister at Metz, on March 27th, 1703, observed the shadow on his dial to deviate an hour and a half, owing, doubtless, to some change transpiring in the condition of the atmosphere, affecting its refractive property. In the case of the retreating shadow on the sun-dial of Ahaz, the magnitude of the phenomenon, the prophet foretelling it, the monarch having the choice whether it should advance or retire, and what he chose being accomplished—these are elements which constitute the event strictly miraculous, though the agencies employed might be purely natural.”—pp. 152, 153.

We should be happy to make our young friends still further acquainted with this excellent volume, but we can do no more than to produce in their minds a wish to examine leisurely its valuable contents; and if the mere taste which we have given, should excite a desire for a larger supply, we can assure them that Mr. Milner has placed a very ample and very delightful repast within their reach.

We should add that the volume is embellished with one of Mr. Baxter's very beautiful oil-coloured engravings, representing a very wonderful instance of atmospheric refraction which appeared in England in 1698, when—

“The real sun shone out with his usual brightness, as the centre there represented. On each side, a false sun appeared of nearly equal brightness, and perfectly white. At the same time, at a considerable distance, a half-sun was seen, having its convex side turned towards the real sun, and of a scarlet colour. It was at eight o'clock in the morning, and remained perfectly distinct for two hours.”—p. 145.

Sermons preached in the ordinary course of his Ministry, and chiefly at Manchester, by the late R. J. M'All, LL.D. With a Portrait.
8vo. pp. 488. London: Jackson & Walford, 1843.

THE publication of another posthumous volume bearing the name and likeness of the late Rev. Dr. M'All, appeared to us a proposal of no

* Isa. xxxviii. 8.

common responsibility, especially a volume of sermons selected from those preached "in the ordinary course of his ministry."

Those only who have experienced them, know the multifarious demands of pastoral life; nor under what a disadvantage pulpit preparations are sometimes effected. It is true that this very pressure may occasionally make the native energy of mind more apparent; but it also leaves its productions more amenable to criticism. When too we remember that the most energetic bursts of pulpit delivery are often supplementary to the written statement, it will scarcely surprise us if to a preacher gifted with so great a talent of improvisation as the late Dr. M'All, the manuscript should be only like the inclined plane of some aerial machine, from which indeed the original impulse might be derived, but which would do little in directing the course and sustaining the flight of the orator when once fairly launched upon his theme. The judgment we then form of a preacher under such circumstances must be liable to many modifications; or rather, we must look at every such circumstance as an advantage considerably on the credit side of our estimate.

These observations may seem apologetical for a deficient volume, but we intend them only to give greater value to one which we deem an important accession to our pulpit literature. The sixteen sermons which are here given, are certainly less elaborate than some in the preceding volumes, and were delivered in the *ordinary* course of Dr. M'All's ministry in Manchester; but though less finished, they have an abundant counterpoise in that Diviner power by which a true preacher deeply in earnest can awaken the slumbering sympathies of his hearers.

Some of the sermons will not disdain classification with the noblest, be they ancient or modern. Yet though we speak thus of their excellence, regarded as compositions merely, they are principally remarkable for their *vitality*; their adaptation to the wants of the flock; their power and pathos on the inspiring themes of Christian life; their congenial sympathy with the internal workings of that religion which is never so glorious as when it reigns within, exciting, purifying, enlarging the hidden streams of thought and feeling. In short, we look upon much of this volume as a most appropriate commentary on the author's language to Mr. Griffin (*Life*, p. cxvi.) "Oh, I care nothing what people may say or think of my abilities, if I may but be useful to souls—God knows, I do not want their applause, *I want their salvation!*"

We remember to have heard of a musical instrument manufactured by Broadwood, and intended for some foreign potentate, which was to be of the finest possible tone, but the case of which was so richly inlaid that the musical effect of the whole was lost. If there were any time at which a similar charge might be true of Dr. M'All's sermons, it is applicable to none in the present volume, unless perhaps in some measure

to the last, preached before the London Missionary Society in 1826. The rest, in differing degrees, are specimens of a less loaded, though never ungraceful workmanship.

It might be expected that a work so constituted will exhibit Dr. M'All's defects as well as his excellences. And if the recent removal of one of the spirits of light who shone in our own time, did not invest his literary remains with a peculiar sanctity which we his contemporaries are loth to violate, we could cite instances in which diffusiveness of language is carried to its utmost verge; in which the preacher's imagination outwent the just limits required by the illustration of his subject; and one sermon which, we think, scarcely merits the position that is here assigned to it. If such faults however there be, they are nobly redeemed by qualities of surpassing worth.

We by no means intend to depreciate those we do not name, by distinguishing among the sermons some on which we have dwelt with a special interest. The fourth sermon, on *the sacrifice of a broken spirit*, has a tender power in strict keeping with its subject, and is introduced by a very masterly analysis of the Psalm from which it is taken, as developing the criteria of true penitence. The next sermon too, from Isa. xxxiii. 17, on the Lord's Supper, considered as commemorative of Christ, and preparatory to heaven, is eminently instructive and beautiful. A tone of gentle and mellowed radiance pervades the whole, the more affecting as we remember how the author has himself entered the glory which he here so touchingly anticipates.

The seventh and eighth sermons, on *spirituality of mind*, are both peculiarly practical. But let the following passages speak for themselves:—

"Man, at his best state, is altogether vanity, bearing by nature the image of the earthy; tending to the dust; minding and absorbed in the things that perish, and unmindful in the same degree of his eternal welfare. And even when renewed by the operation of a celestial influence, he still retains, as man, the sad evidences of the fall in a proneness to engrossment with earthly things, and a comparative distaste to such as are spiritual and Divine. We are yet in the midst of a world the whole character of which is that of alienation and estrangement from the law and love of its Creator. We are yet in a body justly and emphatically described as a body of sin and death. We still experience the motions of sin which are in those of him who is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. He is, as to the primary and elementary principles of his being, a new creature in Christ Jesus; but he is not as yet fully detached from those grosser elements which once made up the whole of his moral existence. Like some of those tribes of animals which change their sphere of life and action at the approach of a new season, he is now on the verge of a purer and loftier range of existence, and about to ascend into a happier region, where he shall expatiate in liberty and endless blessedness, but into which

he is not as yet admitted, and for which the transformation of his nature has not as yet fully adapted him. That transformation will be completed only at death, and it will be seen in all its glory when he rises from the slumbers of the grave into the enjoyment of perfect immortality; when even the body shall be rendered unapproachable by pain, or sickness, or death; and the mind shall be delivered for ever from that bondage of corruption which it is compelled for the present to sustain, as the consequence of its union to this sinful and mortal flesh. But that change is now progressively advancing to its issue, and the soul of the good man is, as this newly-developed and more exalted being, bound for a season in unequal fellowship to that which so soon shall perish, and struggling to be free. Spirituality of mind, therefore, is the growing energy of this superior nature; it is the heavenly principle gaining daily strength and vigour, and the earthly sinking down into an increasing and more constant and acknowledged subjection. We may estimate the degree of spirituality by that in which the love of sin is destroyed; in which its hateful and destructive influence is beheld and dreaded; in which the temptations to its commission are decreased in frequency, or become more slight and feeble; or, perhaps, (for the experience of Christians is in this respect very different,) in which those temptations become more apparent, and seem to grow more powerful, and to require a harder and more resolute struggle for the mastery over them; yet in which they call up more determined and strenuous efforts and a greater measure of holy violence to subdue and destroy them; presenting themselves at once with a more menacing and fearful aspect, which is in the same degree more odious and productive of disgust, and yet with one which seems to indicate the expectation of defeat; since, in the very moment of their onset, the whole energy of the soul is roused into resistance, and the fiercer the strife, the more signal and complete the victory."—pp. 191—193.

Another extract may be given from the same sermon. It is part of a vivid description of the soul in paradise, in contrast with its subsequent debasement. The conception is powerful and terrific:—

"But now, how changed is the aspect of our temporal abode! We are acquainted only with the few and perishing objects that surround us in a world of matter and of sense. We have a most imperfect knowledge of the being, character, and destiny of our own spirits. We are closed in on every hand, above, around, and beneath, from the view of the spiritual creation, and from all access to its objects and its inhabitants. To the greater part of men, no perceptible alteration would be made in the condition of the universe, were the vast whole of being beyond the visible heavens and the earth on which they tread, absorbed and swallowed up in utter nothingness. Nay, more; it would to them occasion no regret, nor affect them with any sensible or present influence, if their own endless futurity were to be cut off for ever by the mandate of their Creator; if when they died, they were to cease from being, and sink into oblivion like a spark quenched in the midnight darkness,—a cloud vanishing from the sky; a phantom fleeing from remembrance, to return no more. They would eat, and drink, and sleep, as securely and as much at ease, after, as before, this dread and unspeakable catastrophe. The sun would seem to shine as pleasantly, and the seasons to return as gratefully as before. The business of life would go on without interruption or disorder. Their relationships would be felt as dear, as tenderly, and as permanent, as now they are. Their whole inheritance of being, though shrivelled into utter insignificance and inconceivable minuteness, contrasted with its present grandeur would seem to have sustained no diminution. They would be, in every respect, the same in their own consciousness,

and to all practical purposes, the same in their condition. . . . The whole world of spiritual being is a blank; the whole reversion of their own being is but annihilation. All on which their highest welfare must for ever depend, is as if it were not. They live, they die, alike unconscious of the true character of the present, and ignorant of the future. They are as the beasts that perish."—pp. 201—203.

Among the more remarkable parts of the volume, are two sermons *on things lawful and things expedient*, preached on occasion of the Manchester Musical Festival of 1828. We recommend them not more on account of their eloquence, than of their essential worth. The preacher has shown the fallacy of Paley's definition of moral obligation, and placed it in contrast to the nobler avowal of Paul, in the text, (1 Cor. vi. 12.) He then proceeds:—

"I fear, my brethren, there is but too little of this strictness and noble severity of principle amongst us. Many, alas, are willing to make a sad and dangerous commutation of the just, the honourable, and the lawful, for the convenient, the profitable, and the agreeable, both in religion and in common life. O for that stern inflexible integrity, which shone forth, with so commanding an aspect, in the reformers and the puritans of our earlier days! Tempered with moderation, and blended with candour, gentleness, and love, such a spirit were almost irresistible. Religion would then be seen in all her Godlike beauty. To be a Christian, is to rise to the possession of the noblest and the truest honour. There is a charm in goodness, there is a majesty in truth, there is a power to touch the very soul, in the calm yet unmoveable resolution of superior piety. . . . Men will stand in silence to behold what cannot but appeal to their deepest and most powerful emotions. They will see with wonder the influence of things invisible. Our life will be to them like a voice from the world unseen; a warning from beyond the grave; a solemn admonition from the land of darkness; a memorial and almost a summons from the tribunal of God. They may affect to despise, but they will inwardly tremble. They may force themselves to scoffing and mockery, but their heart will smite them. The spell will be upon their souls, and they cannot break it. They will feel, and fear, and shrink, and pass away, but the arrow of conviction will remain."—pp. 288, 289.

We had intended to extract, but our limits forbid, a most striking passage from the companion sermon, in which the preacher appeals to those who argue that their own want of a religious profession justifies their trifling with sacred things. Our readers will find the passage in pages 309—311.

Having thus endeavoured to do some feeble justice to the contents, the extraordinary contents of this volume, a few brief remarks may bring us to a close. The following observation occurs in Burnet's Pastoral Care:—

"Without flattering the present age or any person now alive, it must be confessed that preaching is brought of late to a much greater perfection than it was ever before at among us. It is certainly brought much nearer the pattern that S. Chrysostom has set; or perhaps carried beyond it."—p. 216.

We shall not stay to affirm the substantial reason which the Bishop had for his opinion of the preachers of his day ; we merely employ the quotation to express our dissent from the implied proposition that Chrysostom's is the style by which ordinary preachers ought to be tested at all. We are far from depreciating the powers of such men as Chrysostom, or Massillon, or Jeremy Taylor, or Robert M'AlI ; we yield them our high reverence, and that very reverence makes us desirous that they shall not be regarded as models for imitation : but we verily believe that one of the best things that could happen to the world and the church, would be the discarding from our colleges and halls the effort after *eloquent preaching* altogether. So few are the cases in which the real thing is attained, or can be ; so many are those in which the attempt after it ends in pitiable abortions, and diminished usefulness ; and so little fear is there that when there is really the power of genius within, its expansive force will not inevitably burst forth, that we believe the church would gain much if our great preachers were left to stand "alone in their glory," and if as a matter of rule, plain, perspicuous, practical preaching were the highest point of aim. God's power is truth ; and though we thankfully admit the advantages of rhetoric, in enforcing that truth, it must not be forgotten that much pseudo-eloquence is its concealment, and its guilty concealment too. While we thank God for those preachers who can robe themselves in the drapery of a majestic oratory, we are persuaded that nothing could be a better omen than the abjuration of the "purple and fine linen" style, with which too many seek to be adorned ; we sigh for a return to Saxon simplicity, for truth, like beauty, "when unadorned, is adorned the most."

A Hebrew Grammar, containing a Copious and Systematic Developement of the Etymology and Punctuation of that Language. By Samuel Ransom, Classical and Hebrew Tutor in Hackney Theological Seminary, Author of "Biblical Topography," &c. 8vo. pp. 219. London : J. Snow.

WHAT ! we have no doubt some will be ready to exclaim, when they read the above announcement, a Hebrew grammar from Hackney ? Not from Oxford, nor Cambridge, nor the London University, nor Andover,—but from *Hackney* ! Not from any richly endowed seat of literature or academic grove, which affords to many, in rich abundance, the *otium cum dignitate*, for the purposes of deep and protracted study, but from a dissenting college, where the time of all the professors is fully occupied by the daily performance of the absorbing duties of their stations. And not from Homerton, nor Highbury, or Bristol either, the most ancient and reputedly respectable colleges amongst the dissenters, but from *Hackney*, which not long since started as a

kind of itinerary school ! And this grammar, too, is published, not by a D.D., or even an M.A., but by a plain, untitled, Samuel Ransom ! But it is even so. We have a veritable Hebrew Grammar ; and one of which neither Oxford nor Cambridge, nor any other seat of learning, however ancient, or richly endowed, or famous on account of its literary professors, or alumni, or productions, need to be ashamed ; nay, one which they might think it an honour to claim ; and one, too, which has not been rendered superfluous by the labours, learned, and meritorious, and successful as they have been, of such men as Gesenius, and Robertson, and Lee, and Stuart. It will be reckoned worthy of being associated with the writings of these eminent scholars, and be considered, we have little doubt, by even them, as a valuable accession to Hebrew literature.

It may well be regarded as one of the auspicious signs of the times, that the Hebrew language is arresting more extensive and devoted attention than it has formerly done, and that the study of it is pursued with more ardent and determined perseverance. It merits all these, and will repay them. It is, probably, the most ancient language in the world. There is reason to think that it was spoken in Paradise by the progenitors of the human race, and that it was imparted to them by the great Author of reason and speech ; a fact which deserves more attention than it has received from those who have studied its etymology, and endeavoured to ascertain its original elements and formation, and whether it was at first biliteral or triliteral, or whether verbs were formed from nouns, or nouns from verbs. In their speculations they seem to take it for granted that it existed and was spoken, for some time, in a monosyllabic state, by those who were but little raised above the condition of children or savages ; and that it was, by degrees, as the children grew up, as the savages became civilised, expanded into the form in which we find it in the Bible. But surely it is evident from the sacred record, that God did not form Adam a kind of full-grown babe or child,—a man as it regarded his body, and an infant as it regarded his mind,—furnishing him only with an alphabet of language, and a few primal sounds, and leaving him to acquire the rest as he could,—able to stand, and walk, and work, but unable to think or converse. Surely he was capable of understanding the command and the threatening, “Of every tree of the garden,” &c. And he must have possessed the power of speech to a considerable extent when he exclaimed, on Eve’s being presented to him, “This is now bone of my bone,” &c. ; and when “he gave names to every beast of the field,” &c. Eve could understand the address of the serpent, and reply to him in regularly-formed sentences, which indicated considerable extent of conception and ideas. They both understood the language of God when he interrogated them respecting the sin which they had committed ; and were able to form and utter excuses, as ingenious and plausible as

any sinner of the present day could do in similar circumstances. Now, in those passages we have verbs, and nouns, and pronouns, and prepositions, and conjunctions, and regular and irregular verbs, and nouns in regimen, and verbs in conjugation, &c. We have the names of external objects, and the expression of sentiments respecting actions and events, death and life, right and wrong. In short, we have a regularly-formed language of considerable extent, implying no very confined range of ideas, or feeble power of thought and expression. How are any to ascertain, then, whether nouns or verbs were first used, or how the language was gradually formed? or what probability is there that the preformants and afformants, and prefixes of verbs and nouns, were for some time used as distinct parts of speech, and afterwards, for the purpose of rendering language more concise and convenient, abbreviated and joined to the words with which they are now found connected? We readily grant, or rather we would maintain, that the Hebrew language was at first phonetic; that it has its roots, and that its several parts of speech are connected, and that one may be traced to another, and that much skill may be observed in its structure. And it is a very rational and useful employment to trace the connexion and dependence of its several parts of speech, only we must deny that it was formed in the way which etymologists in general seem to take for granted. God created man perfect in knowledge and holiness, to praise and serve him, and to enjoy social intercourse, from the very commencement of his existence, and therefore, doubtless, furnished with every thing necessary for these purposes, and, consequently, with the faculty of speech. The great probability is, that the language of the posterity of Adam degenerated after the fall, rather than improved; and in some respects, and for some purposes, became less, instead of more copious; and it is in this way that we would account for all the poor and barbarous languages that are found in the world. Have we not ample proof in its history, as well as in its present state, that language may degenerate and become less copious, even amongst nations that are in some degree civilised, and where the art of writing is known?

But to return from this digression; a large part of the volume of inspiration exists in Hebrew. This is, doubtless, whatever may be the pretensions of some nations, the most ancient written language in the world. It gives a highly interesting view of the most ancient manners, and customs, and events; and of the religious sentiments and practice of the human race, as well as of the origin of the different nations of the earth. Moreover, the Hebrew, furnished with points and accents, will be found, amidst all its simplicity, a refined and logical language, possessing great beauty, and harmony, and force, far, very far from being a barbarous tongue, or from exhibiting any evidences that it ever was so. We apprehend, that if we had all Solomon's songs, and

proverbs, and dissertations on the productions of nature, and all the other books that were ever written in the Hebrew, we should find that it was a copious language. There are many indications of this in the fragments of it that remain. And further, the study of it in its pointed and accented form, affords as good an exercise to the mind, requires as much attention and nice discrimination, and is as well calculated to improve the intellect, as the study of either Greek or Latin; and all who would avail themselves of every advantage for gaining an accurate and thorough knowledge of Hebrew, must make themselves master of the points, and, in some degree at least, of the accents. We are very far from attributing to them a Divine origin, or from thinking that they infallibly exhibit the sense; but they are a kind of logical commentary, written by men of acute and philosophical minds, imbued with a profound veneration for the language which they studied, and anxious to ascertain and fix both its sense and its most ancient pronunciation. In this important and interesting study, Mr. Ransom's grammar will afford very efficient assistance.

If we are required to substantiate this recommendation by an indication of particulars, we observe—

1. That it is written in a very clear and intelligible style. Mr. R. has conveyed his meaning in concise and perspicuous language, and in a way which indicates that he has carefully studied every particular, and formed definite ideas of it for himself. In this respect, it may advantageously be compared with the grammars of Robertson, or Lee, or Stuart, learned and excellent as they are.

2. It is well adapted to the circumstances of both those who are merely commencing the language, and of those who have made considerable progress in it; while it will be found to merit the attention of even the greatest proficients. Students who use this grammar will not find it necessary to have recourse to another, before they can gain a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew tongue.

3. The principles that govern the changes of vowels are more clearly and extensively developed and stated in it than in any grammar that we have seen. The writing of this part of it must have cost the author immense labour, and been the result of long and careful observation. Also there are some nice and discriminating, and, to us, original remarks on converted tenses and words.

4. In the third part, the accents, which have been rejected by many as superfluous, or inexplicable, or a mere incumbrance, are placed in a clearer light, and exhibited in a more intelligible form, than we have ever seen them before. With the grammar of Nordsheimer we must confess ourselves unacquainted; but it appears evident that Mr. Ransom's inversion of the order of the German grammarian, is an improvement, as it secures a more natural and effective arrangement. We are much mistaken if this part of the work does not induce some who

have hitherto disregarded or even vituperated the accents, to make themselves acquainted with them; and we apprehend they will find that, by their being led to pay a more minute and critical attention to the logical relations of words and phrases than they have formerly done, they will study and read the language with greater pleasure and profit. To say the very least, this part of the grammar deserves the careful perusal of every Hebrew scholar. The student will find the paradigms of the verbs all that he could wish. They are exhibited in such a way on opposite pages, that he has the regular and all the irregular verbs in each form of Kal, Niphal, &c., presented to his eye at once, and may, with the greatest ease, compare them with one another. Moreover, he will find examples of verbs with a guttural for the first, second, and third radical. Mr. Ransom's arrangement of the conjugations is amongst the best that we have seen. The book is also beautifully "got up," to use an expression "of the trade," and appears to be remarkably free from errata.

Perhaps we might differ from Mr. Ransom on some particulars of not much importance. We should prefer the view given by Yeats and Stuart, and some others, of sheva, as being a short vowel, though often not pronounced. We cannot approve of the word "vowel-less," as it is often applied by Mr. R. And his arrangement of the parts of speech, from the order in which most of them occur in the word וְיִבְרָאֵם, will be thought by some fanciful, rather than natural.

We cordially recommend the grammar, and hope that its author will be encouraged to publish a volume on syntax and prosody, without any delay.

CURSORY NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

FROM the Derby press there is now issuing, by the Catholic Book Society, a series of Roman Catholic volumes at *one shilling each*. Thus *Dr. Milner's End of Religious Controversy*, which originally filled an 8vo. volume, and was published at 12s., is now compressed into 494 pages, 18mo., for a twelfth of that price, which, of course, facilitates its circulation twelve-fold. This book enterprise of our Romish neighbours must be watched and counteracted, and we are happy, therefore, to receive *Mr. Gavin's* on "*The End of Controversy, being Strictures on Dr. Milner's work in support of Popish Errors, &c.*" This work originally formed part of a weekly paper published in Glasgow, in 1822, entitled, *The Protestant*, by the late William McGavin, Esq., in which he devoted twenty-four sections to the examination of the former book. It is now published separately, and it is in size and subject a companion volume to the other. We regret that it is not published at the same price. We cordially recommend it as a shrewd, searching, and successful reply to the apologist of Popery. But we would advise our brethren in the ministry to read both. (Religious Tract Society.)

The shafts of death have recently struck with fatal certainty some of our ablest and most useful men. *Funeral Discourses* for four of them are now upon our table. We had intended to devote a few pages of review to these publications, which well

deserve something more than a cursory notice; but much of their interest will have passed away before we could find room in that department,—“cursory notices” must therefore suffice.

1. *Pastoral Solitude: A Sermon occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Thomas Jackson, Minister of Stockwell Chapel, addressed to his church and congregation, on Sunday Morning, March 26th, 1843.* By George Collison. (8vo. T. Ward & Co.) This is a scriptural and affectionate discourse by an old friend of the deceased, which includes a biographical sketch of his life and ministry.

2. *The Final Triumph of God's Faithful Servants; A Sermon preached in Stepney Meeting-House, on Lord's-day, June 18th, 1843, on occasion of the lamented Death of the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, D.D.* By Ralph Wardlaw, D.D. To which is prefixed the Funeral Address by Henry Forster Burder, D.D. (8vo. J. Snow.) A discourse which supplies a very characteristic, beautiful, and appropriate illustration of Isa. xxv. 8, and is closed with a comprehensive and graphic account of the character and history of our lamented friend.

3. *Piety the best Patriotism; A Sermon occasioned by the Decease of the late Thomas Wilson, Esq., Treasurer of Highbury College, preached at Craven Chapel, on Sunday, June 25th.* By the Rev. J. Leifchild, D.D. (8vo. Jackson & Walford.) It was most appropriate that Dr. Leifchild, who, in early life, enjoyed the friendly countenance of Mr. Wilson, should be requested to commemorate his “good deeds” in Craven Chapel, one of the many monuments which exist in town and country of his princely and enlightened munificence. That *Piety is the best Patriotism*, is briefly illustrated from the history of Nehemiah in about ten pages, and the bulk of the discourse, thirty pages, is occupied with an account of the life and labours of our lamented friend. We think Dr. L. has discharged the difficult and delicate task of portraying the character of the departed with much skill and fidelity. All who knew the venerable original will recognise the likeness.

4. *Man's Ignorance of his Time; A Sermon occasioned by the Sudden Death of the Rev. Samuel Kidd, late Missionary and Principal of the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca, and, subsequently, Professor of Chinese in University College, London.* 8vo. (T. Ward & Co.) This discourse contains many solemn and affecting remarks on the uncertainty of life and on our ignorance of the day of our death; and also the leading facts of the late professor's history. It would be an easy matter to enrich our pages with copious biographical extracts, from each of these sermons; but we do not think that practice just to the authors, who can have little hope that their publications will be sold, if their most interesting portions are to be transferred to the pages of the periodicals. This remark particularly applies to the discourse on Mr. Kidd, seeing that any profits that result from its sale will be given to his greatly distressed family.

THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

THE Requirements of the Times urged on the attention of the Rising Ministry. An Address delivered to the Students of Rotherham College, on Wednesday, June 28th, 1843. By the Rev. John Ely, Minister of East Parade Chapel, Leeds. 8vo. London: Jackson & Walford.

Congregationalism, the Defence of the Truth; A Sermon preached before the Annual Meeting of the Staffordshire Congregational Union, at the Tabernacle, Hanley, July 11th, 1843. By J. C. Gallaway, A.M. Published by special request. 8vo. London: Ward & Co.

Reflections after Reading; or, Sketches Biographical, Ecclesiastical, and Historical. By John Cockin. 8vo. London: Ward & Co.

Lectures on Tractarian Theology. By John Stoughton. 12mo. London: Jackson & Walford.

The Philosophy of Training; with Suggestions on the Necessity of Normal Schools for Teachers to the Wealthier Classes, and Strictures on the Prevailing Mode of Teaching Languages. By A. R. Craig, Islington. 12mo. London: Macmillan.

Cowper's English Version of the Odyssey of Homer; carefully revised and corrected, with a Commentary in Explanation of the Practical Purpose of the Text. By OT ΤΙΣ, F.R.S. 2 vols. 8vo. London: Harvey & Darton.

A Memoir of Hilmar Ernst Ranschenbusch, late pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church at Elberfeld, Prussia. By the late Wilhelm Leipoldt, M.A. Translated from the German by R. F. Walker, M. A., Curate of Purleigh. 12mo. London: Seeley, Burnside, & Seeley.

A Plea for Liberty of Education; A Second Letter to Sir J. Graham, Bart., on the Educational Clauses of the Factories Bill. By J. H. Hinton, M.A. 8vo. London: Houlston & Stoneman.

The System of Late Hours in Business; its Evils, its Causes, and its Cure. By A. J. King. 8vo. London: W. Aylott.

An Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church, that Flourished within the first three hundred Years after Christ. By Lord Peter King. In two Parts. Part I. With Remarks and an Appendix, the whole comprising an Abridgement of an "Original Draught of the Primitive Church," in Answer to the above-mentioned Discourse by a Clergyman of the Church of England. 8vo. London: Seeley, Burnside and Co.

Inaugural Lecture delivered before the Members and Friends of the British and Foreign Institute, at the Hanover Square Rooms; Earl of Devon in the Chair. 8vo. London: Fisher, Son and Co.

The Lever of the Gospel: or the Working Church. By J. R. Balne. 18mo. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.

On the Agency of Satan as the Author of Evil. By a Member of the Church of England. 12mo. London: Seeley and Co.

Ford's Rudiments of Music. Eleventh Thousand. Carefully revised by the Author. London: Simpkin and Co.

Tractarianism, compared with the Prayer Book. 12mo. London: Seeley and Co.
"New Views," compared with the Word of God. Second Edition. 12mo. London: Groombridge.

A Letter to the Bishops of the Church of England, on the Necessity of Liturgical Adjustment arising from the Principles and Practice of the School of Tractarian Theology. 8vo. London: Seeley and Co.

More Songs and Ballads for the People. Not by a Reverend B.A. of Trinity College, Cambridge. 12mo. London: Ward and Co.

A Review of Professor Sewell's "Christian Morals." By Henry Walter, B.D., F.A.S., Professor at Haileybury College. 12mo. London: Seeley and Co.

Thody Brady's Memorial, in which is clearly set forth an account of the System of Limited Instruction pursued in the Irish National Schools. Seventh Thousand. 12mo. London: Seeley and Co.

Westminster Abbey, and Life. Two Poems. By Owen Howell. 8vo. London: T. Miller.

Abel: written, but with great Humility, in Reply to Lord Byron's Cain. By Owen Howell. 12mo. London: J. Marden.

The Claims of the Christian Aborigines of the Turkish or Osmanli Empire upon Civilised Nations, &c. By W. F. Ainsworth, F.G.S. 12mo. London: Cunningham and Mortimer.

CHRONICLE OF BRITISH MISSIONS.

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1843.

THE last Annual Report is now in circulation. It is unnecessary to say anything of that part of it which was read at the meeting in Exeter Hall, as the substance of it has been for some time before the public. The Directors would now refer to the Statistical Tables, as containing full particulars respecting the number of agents, stations, hearers, schools, children, &c. It is, however, to the Appendix (consisting of fifty pages,) that they would call the special attention of the friends of the Society. They consider it an important document, because it furnishes from most of the counties of England, a variety of facts bearing on the present state of society in many of the rural districts. Under continuous divisions, illustrations are given to show the difficulties of Home Missionaries, arising from ignorance and superstition, as well as from opposition, and the spread of Puseyism; also many encouraging testimonies as to the labours and success of the agents of the society. The Reports having thus been prepared and printed at a considerable expenditure of time and money, the Directors are desirous that they may be properly circulated, and duly read. They beg, therefore, to state, that subscribers and ministers who may wish copies of the large Report for their friends, are requested to apply at the Home Missionary Rooms, No. 4, Blomfield Street. Any person desiring a copy of the Abstract of the Report, which contains the Statistical Tables, may also obtain it by applying as above. The Directors would respectfully request those who receive Reports, to keep them in circulation as extensively as possible, as this is found to be one of the easiest and most efficient ways of greatly increasing the *value*, if not the number of Reports.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

The Directors are happy to state that suitable books for establishing forty Sunday School libraries are now preparing to be sent to as many stations. The Religious Tract Society has most liberally granted them at half-price; and on most of the stations the friends have most cheerfully assisted in paying a part of the cost. The Directors hope that their friends will assist them in paying the balance.

WEEK-DAY SCHOOLS ON HOME MISSIONARY STATIONS.

Some weeks ago, the Directors forwarded to most of the missionaries and pastors connected with the Society a circular containing the following queries:—

“1.—What is the population in the several villages and hamlets on your station where you preach—or within four miles, though you do not preach in them?

“2.—State what provision there is for week-day instruction in those places—the denominations that have schools—the number of children attending them—the fees paid by the children—and, if possible, the character of the instruction that is given.

“3.—Will you (if practicable) ascertain how many children on your station, from 7 to 15 years of age, are unable to read or write?

“4.—Can you say if there is a national school, and what means are used to supply it with scholars?

“5.—Would the establishment of a week-day school on your station, tend to the prosperity of your Sunday-school, and check the influence that is at present directed against you by the high church or Puseyite influence?

"6.—If assistance could be obtained towards the support of such a school, what is the smallest sum likely to be required, in addition to what might be obtained from the children, and from the friends of education around, for this object ?

"7.—Have you any building suitable for a school-room—could any part of the chapel be employed for that purpose without much inconvenience ?

"8.—What are the branches of education that it is desirable to teach ?

"9.—Can you state the number of adults unable to read, on your station ?"

A considerable number of returns have been received in reply to the above circular. The difficulty, however, of obtaining information, on various points, has been so great on some stations, that the returns are as yet incomplete. We are waiting for them. In the mean time it appears desirable to give a few extracts from some of the returns, that the very important question of education on a liberal basis may be kept before the friends of education. It will be seen very plainly that the prosperity, if not the very existence of our Sunday-schools, depends on the establishment of week-day schools. It will also be perceived with how little assistance this most desirable object may be accomplished, and how important a bearing it has on the future success of Home Missionary exertions.

"In B—— parish those parents who do not send their children to the church day or Sunday-schools, are not allowed the benefits resulting from a clothing club ; and are marked characters when local charities are distributed, (especially if they send their children to the dissenting Sunday-school,) and are the first parties to whom labour is refused by those who are under clerical influence, and this is the case with almost every tradesman and farmer living here—clothing is given to some of the children,—and many methods are used to show that those only who follow the *dictum* of the parish priest are to expect favour.

"The establishment of a week-day school, on truly liberal principles, would decidedly tend to the prosperity of our Sunday-school, would greatly check the influence at present directed against our cause, and greatly assist in building up the cause of truth. Many parents mourn exceedingly that they are obliged to send their children to the national school, and more so, that they cannot, in consequence, send them to our Sabbath-school. Some content themselves with sending their children to our Sabbath-school alone, rather than send them there on such conditions. And some two or three parents send their children to the T—— British School (more than six miles distant) on the Monday, and let them return on the Friday. But, from the expense in finding lodgings, it is not many who can do this.

There is no week-day school connected with any religious body but the establishment, within eleven miles. In all the schools the church catechism and the collects for Sundays and saints' days are the principal part of the lessons committed to memory. To be able to repeat the 'catechism' and collects, is thought perfection in knowledge.

"At P—— our attempt to establish a Sunday-school was crushed at the outset by the influence of the day-school. Four of the children present the first Sunday we commenced the Sunday-school were dismissed from the day-school, and not received again until their parents promised they should not attend our school again. The effect has been to prevent all who have children they wish to send to the day-school, or expect to obtain favours through the clergyman, sending their children to our school.

"The system of education pursued in this neighbourhood seldom teaches more than to read, (never to think,) though it professes much more. In a population of 333, I found but four children from seven to fifteen that could write.

"I could find in this neighbourhood freeholders of middle age who rank amongst the more intelligent, who, four years ago, did not know that the Roman

Catholic form of religion was ever the established religion of England. The general feeling of the neighbourhood is that the Church of England is as it always was—just as the apostles left it—and that all other sections of the churches of Christ are new religions; and indeed persons who read but little, except the tracts of the Christian Knowledge Society, can have no other idea of the church of England.

"The general provision is very bad. In most of the villages or hamlets there are only dame schools, kept by women, utterly disqualified for the work of tuition. In one or two places there are schools kept by men, and on their own account, as means of livelihood. In W——, there is one of the latter, rather respectable in education, but at 8s. or 9s. per quarter, a sum which quite shuts out all very poor children. Here, also, there is (as in most of the parishes,) a *parochial free school* for boys and girls, supported by the interest of legacies, and free contributions. The children's parents are *narrowly watched*, lest they should go to chapel, and the pupils are supplied with some clothing, and other matters of help, by which they (poor things) are kept under the awful influence of erroneous teaching. The character of the instruction imparted in any of these schools, whether parochial or otherwise, is merely reading, writing, and ciphering. As to anything in the shape of principles, the children have none; and, in this particular, they are not far below their instructors.

"The establishment of a day school would be hailed with delight by many persons: it would tend to the prosperity of our Sunday schools, and would check the opposition directed against us by high-church influence. That it is necessary, the following facts will show:—The Sunday schools connected with our chapel once contained two hundred and twenty children: we have now ninety. The number is thus reduced by the interference of the clergy; bribes, threats, and persuasions, are used, and when these have failed, the benefit of the charity has, in some instances, been tried, but not always with success. A vacancy occurred very recently in the charity: the vicar went to a family, five of whom attended our Sunday school, offering to give one the benefit of it, on condition that the other four leave our Sunday school. The offer was rejected.

"Of the dame schools, two are kept by persons worshiping with us. This is sufficient to call forth the opposition of the clergy, who have called on the parents of the children, and remonstrated with them on the sin of sending their children to schools kept by dissenters; at the same time, offering to pay half the cost of their education, (which would be one penny per week,) if they would send them to dame schools patronized by them. By these means, in one case, the number of scholars is reduced to thirteen; the other has but two remaining!

"I think about £15 per year would be necessary, in addition to what might be raised by the children and friends of education, to establish a good school.

"The population is from six to seven thousand. There are five day schools connected with the establishment: the average attendance at each school is about sixty children. The fee paid is from one penny to twopence per week; but rather than they should attend any other school, they will educate them for nothing. The instruction given is of the lowest order—reading, writing, catechism, creeds, &c. &c. As a necessary part of their education, they are taught to pull off their hats, and to make a very low bow when they meet a state priest. The other day, a clergyman told the children of his school not to take any notice of a dissenting minister, and on no account ever to enter a dissenting chapel; if they did, they would incur his displeasure.

"You are aware, that about two years ago, I established a day school at D——, and I may safely say, if this had not been done, we should not have had any Sabbath school at the present time. It has been the means of checking the church influence

brought against us; and you will be pleased to know that our Sunday school is much larger than at any former period.

"As it regards the support of day schools, I will tell you how we have acted. We raised £10 yearly by *subscriptions*; the pence from the children have amounted to £6, making in the whole £16, which we pay to the school-mistress. My impression is, that if from £5 to £7 could be obtained yearly for each village, besides what could be collected on the station, and in the neighbourhood, day schools might be established, and efficiently conducted. *There is one fact* must not be overlooked, that the children seldom remain at school after nine years of age, and many are taken to work much earlier; so they must be taught to read young, or they never will have the opportunity. I think if the principal stations could have a school-master, the other stations might be taught by intelligent females. If this could be done on all our Home Missionary stations, glorious would be the result."

IRISH EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

THE Committee continue to receive from their agents labouring in that scene of agitation and darkness which Ireland presents, such communications as serve to prove that the faithful preaching of the everlasting Gospel, in connexion with the circulation of the sacred Scriptures and religious books, is the true panacea for its woes; and that Protestant Christians, in this country, should persevere amid the ecclesiastical and political contentions of Ireland, in stretching out the olive-branch of truth, which, while it brings glory to God in the highest, diffuses peace on earth, and good-will to men. The following extracts, from the last journal of an agent, reveal some of the difficulties our brethren have to contend with in the south of Ireland, and will, we hope, tend to elicit fervent prayer for them, and sympathy in their various trials.

"July 8, 1843.

"During the past quarter the usual services at W—, E—, K—, and R—, have been regularly conducted. The attendance has been somewhat more encouraging than throughout some of the preceding months, in consequence perhaps of the improved state of the weather, which usually exerts some influence. We have occasionally Roman Catholic hearers, especially in country parts. Yet such is the vigilance of the priests, and the persecuting spirit of their neighbours, that few will venture to brave the opposition upon which they may calculate. None but those who have resided in the more southern parts of Ireland are aware of the difficulty to be encountered in gaining access to Romanists, or inducing them to attend Protestant places of worship. The distribution of tracts seems to be at present the most certain way of reaching their dwellings; and as most of the peasant children can now read, there is a high degree of probability, that, where the parents cannot do so, the children will be called upon to read those publications. During the past seven or eight years, much has been done for this country, even by the secular education that has been given. Since the rising generation, with few exceptions, will be able to read, if short tracts, written in a good spirit, pointing out the unreasonable and unscriptural character of their creed, were freely circulated amongst them, great good would be the result. The pulpit and the press are the great engines for effecting any moral or spiritual revolution in this country. Where the one cannot be brought to bear, the other can, and should therefore be worked by every power that we possess.

"The state of excitement in this locality has recently been fearful. Families have left, and many are preparing to do so. Unhappily, every political movement in this

land assumes a religious aspect. I was myself addressed in the streets by persons who threatened my life. Others told our children, that they should be 'amongst the first that were to be killed.' Yet I most scrupulously avoid taking any part, or expressing any public opinion, with reference to political subjects. Matters have gone so far, that 'Repeal Wardens,' as they call themselves, are canvassing the inhabitants, and demanding their opinion. One of them called upon me a few evenings since to know my sentiments. I told him that, 'as a minister of the Gospel, I always refused to give any public opinion upon such matters.' That we are on the eve of some sanguinary struggle in this country, I seriously apprehend, but trust that the great Head of the church will enable his people to witness a good confession, should their faith be tested by any fiery ordeal. The husband of a lady, who for many years attended our place of worship here, has been murdered within the last week, for venturing to collect county rates. The execution of all law seems for the present to be suspended. Business is of course paralysed, and universal gloom prevails. Although our rulers may be in some measure to blame, the 'man of sin' is taking advantage of the present state of things, and seems determined to make a stand in this country, from which nothing can dislodge him but the weapons of truth. Unless matters very soon take an unexpected turn, I fear that the witnesses will have not only to prophesy in sackcloth, but in many places to lie dead in the streets of the Great City.

"I have endeavoured to keep up an interest here, by announcing different subjects for consideration; and having gone through the leading incidents of the Old Testament, I am now pursuing a similar course as to the New. I have had many engagements at missionary and Bible-meetings throughout the quarter. Each week I conduct five, and sometimes six or seven public services, besides travelling, &c., which pretty fully occupies my time, and taxes my strength.

"I trust and pray that all the passing events of the day, both within the church, and in the world, may be over-ruled for good."

The above communications, with many others of a similar character, confirm the conviction long felt by the Committee, that Agents should be employed as *Colporteurs* in Ireland, who shall visit the more remote districts, for the purpose of selling, at a greatly reduced rate, copies of the Bible, and of books which bear on the subject of popery, and on the great points of revealed truth. The Committee are instituting inquiries for suitable agents, and with a view to determine on the localities in which they shall labour; and now appeal to their friends for additional subscriptions or donations for this special object, which will be thankfully received by the Secretaries, at No. 7, Blomfield Street.

COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THE following report of the proceedings of our brethren in Montreal is most encouraging. With the assistance of the Colonial Missionary Society, an academy for training a native Canadian ministry has been commenced. The proceedings of its first annual meeting are here recorded. The foundation of the second Congregational chapel in that city has been laid, with feelings of most cordial harmony and co-operation between our beloved brethren, Messrs. Wilkes and Carruthers, and the people of their respective churches. In aid of the erection of this chapel, which will be both spacious and respectable, about £1000 currency has been contributed in Montreal; but an appeal for assistance from the churches both of Britain and America will be indispensable.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EASTERN CANADA.

The meeting was held on the evening of the 7th July, in the Lecture Room of St. Maurice-Street Church, and, notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, was very numerous attended. On the motion of the Rev. J. J. Carruthers, seconded by the Rev. J. Drummond, of Brockville, the Rev. H. Wilkes was requested to preside. After the usual introductory devotional exercises, three of the students delivered each an essay on a subject chosen by himself, in the following order:—

Mr. J. Bowles, on *Christian Hope*. Mr. J. Robinson, on *The Characteristics of the Christian Church*. Mr. C. Mackay, on *Christian Responsibility*.

These essays were received by the numerous friends present with the most unequivocal marks of satisfaction.

The Rev. J. J. Carruthers then read the following brief report of the institute for the past year:—

"The date of this infant institution is as yet so recent as to afford little, in the details of its history, that is otherwise than *prospectively* interesting to the friends of ministerial education. The ground-work of a liberal, appropriate, and useful education has been laid, in the case of the students admitted into the institution, in their careful initiation into the original languages of the sacred volume, and in their partial perusal of some of the principal Greek and Latin classics. Their proficiency in these studies will be best attested by the documents subjoined to this report.

"These studies, in addition to a course of lectures on the composition of sermons, have so completely absorbed the time of the students during the past year, as to preclude the desirableness of the course on Logic, by the Rev. H. Wilkes, which will, however, be entered on during the next session. The students have, in addition to the said branches of study, prepared and delivered sermons, for the most part weekly, in the presence of the theological professor. He very cheerfully and thankfully bears his testimony to the uniform consistency of his beloved pupils, their diligence and zeal in the prosecution of their studies, and their growing meetness, intellectual and moral, for the important and arduous, though most honourable work, to which they are devoted—and entertains no doubt that, should God mercifully prolong their lives, they will be useful, and he trusts, able ministers of the New Testament. He and his respected colleague feeling increasingly the responsibility of the task assigned them, desire to commend themselves, their beloved pupils, and the interest of the Institution generally, to the prayers and the support of the Congregational churches of this colony, and trust that, at no distant period, these churches will realise an answer to their intercessions, and reap the full reward of their liberal contributions, in the zealous and successful labours of these beloved youths, who have arisen from among themselves, and by their instrumentality, have been qualified for the sacred office of the Christian ministry."

The Rev. J. Anderson, of Melbourne, then read the following document:

"We, the undersigned ministers, appointed by the Congregational Union, to examine the students of the Institute in classical and theological literature, do hereby express the great satisfaction we have experienced in witnessing their progress in these studies, and consider that much praise is due to their tutor, for the careful attention which it is evident he has bestowed on their education.

"*Montreal, July 7, 1843.*

JAMES ROBERTSON.
J. ANDERSON."

The chairman then laid before the meeting a testimonial from the Rev. H. Esson, of the Scotch Church, addressed to the Rev. J. J. Carruthers.

These documents having been read, the Rev. Messrs. Miles and Shirrell, Robertson, Bourne and Mackilligan, respectively moved and seconded the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted.

"1. That as an educated and well-trained ministry is intimately connected with the spread of vital religion, and the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, we cannot therefore but express our gratitude to Almighty God for the prosperity of the Congregational Institute during the past year, our cordial thanks to the Rev. J. J. Carruthers, for his very valuable services as Classical and Theological Professor, and our approbation of the proficiency and conduct of the students; praying the great Head of the church, that he may continue to smile upon and bless them in their future studies and labours.

"2. That whilst, at all times, an educated Christian ministry is most desirable, it is especially so in the present day, when diversified and fatal errors, in relation both to doctrine and practice, are propagated so diligently by men who combine so much acquired and natural talent; and successful opposition to whose efforts is only to be expected, in dependence on the Divine blessing, as the result of sound knowledge, and enlightened and well-directed zeal.

"3. That this meeting considers the Congregational Institute as of vast importance in relation to the great object of the Union, viz., the propagation of the Gospel through the colony; and pledges itself to earnest prayer and liberal contribution on its behalf—and that an appeal be forthwith made to the churches generally on its behalf.

"The Congregational Institute has obviously taken hold of the affections of the people. The need of a native Christian ministry for Canada is felt more and more, as the field is progressively explored; and the constantly augmenting population of the colony strengthens and enforces its claim on the resources and practical benevolence of the church of Christ."

GOSFORD STREET CHURCH, MONTREAL.

The foundation-stone of this edifice was laid on Friday morning, the 8th of July, at ten o'clock, A. M., by the Rev. J. J. Carruthers, Professor of Theology in the Congregational Institute of Eastern Canada, and pastor of the second Congregational church, for whose accommodation it is to be erected. Notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, a large concourse of spectators assembled on the spot, and the proceedings were, throughout, deeply interesting. The Congregational Union of Eastern Canada being in session, many ministers and delegates from neighbouring churches were present.

The appearance of the church, as it will stand when finished, will reflect great credit on the architect.

The proceedings were begun by an address from the Rev. H. Wilkes, pastor of the first Congregational church, who spoke as follows:—

"The part assigned to me in the interesting exercises of this occasion, is to present a brief detail of facts and circumstances by which we have been led to our present engagement; I leave my friend and brother, Mr. Carruthers, to state principles. In the month of June, 1831, the Rev. Richard Miles, who had recently returned from South Africa, being in London, conferred with the individual who now addresses you, on the state and prospects of the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ in Canada. Having received the fullest information in my possession, he determined to embark with his family for Canada, which he did at his own cost, that he might here declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, in connexion with those principles and practices concerning his kingdom, which distinguish Congregational churches. On his arrival in this city, at the close of September, he was hailed by several friends, and by the active efforts of Mr. James Connell, sen., and others, was retained—Mr. Bruce's school room, M'Gill Street, procured, and public service commenced on the first Lord's day in October, 1831. The congregation becoming

speedily too large for this room, the ball-room of the Mansion House, College Street, was obtained through the efforts of Mr. Joseph Savage, one of those now engaged in this work, and being fitted up as a place of worship, was opened for the purpose on Lord's-day, December 18th, 1831. On the 6th of July following, a Christian church was formed, on the apostolical and primitive model, consisting of only fifteen members. Measures were speedily adopted for the erection of a suitable place of worship, and after much and laborious effort, that end was happily attained; and the present commodious building in St. Maurice Street was dedicated to the service of God in February, 1835.

"In the good providence of God, and partly as the result of most disinterested proceedings on the part of the Rev. R. Miles, I left my charge in Edinburgh, and having safely again reached this country, commenced my pastoral labours on the first Lord's-day in October, 1836. We have been much blessed in our work, and 'increased with men like a flock.' At the close of 1839, we found it necessary to erect galleries, and they, after a season, did not supply us with all the room we require.

"There are two modes by which our churches feel it proper to put forth branches. The first is, when the church becomes very large, too extensive for the efficient care of one bishop or pastor, it assembles and resolves that another ought to be formed, and sends forth some sixty or eighty of its members to found a sister institution in another part of our large cities. The second is, though the church may not be strong enough thus to act, yet other circumstances connected with the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ, requiring the presence and labours of another pastor in the city, and the locality and size of the place of worship, being such as to induce a conviction that great good would be done by the formation of another church in a different part of the city, we approve of an arrangement by which a few of our brethren seek to form the nucleus of another church, and cordially dismiss them for this purpose. The latter is the description of our circumstances and course. We were not full to repletion, and therefore did not require bleeding—we were not what might be appropriately termed a large church; yet so convinced were we of the importance of that holy enterprise which has convened us together this morning, that we cheerfully submitted to be weakened, though we believe this will be but temporary, in order that the cause of our blessed Redeemer might be extended in this increasing city. My presence here to-day, and the presence of a large number of the people to whom it is my honour and happiness to minister, sufficiently indicate with what entire cordiality we view this important movement. May the great Head of the church abundantly bless it! Here may many 'sinners be converted from the error of their way, their souls saved from death, and the multitude of sins covered.' Amen."

"John Leeming, Esq. then read a copy of the following paper, which, with various British and Colonial coins, was deposited in a glass bottle:—

"On the 7th day of July, in the year of our Lord 1843, in the seventh year of the reign of her most excellent Majesty, Queen Victoria, Sir Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, Bart., K.C.B., being Governor-General of Canada, the foundation stone of this building, intended as a place of worship for the second church in this city, of Trinitarian Protestant Christians, commonly called Congregationalists, was laid by the Rev. J. J. Carruthers, pastor, in the presence of the members of the said church, and also the ministers and members of neighbouring churches, with solemn prayer to Him who hath promised in his Holy Word, that wherever his people meet in his name, he will come unto them and bless them.

"*Building Committee*—Joseph Savage; John Birks; John Leeming; Ross Anderson; James Dunnett. *Architects*—Messrs. Wells and Son.

"*Montreal, July 7th, 1843.*

"The Rev. J. J. Carruthers then proceeded to the ceremony of the morning, by placing the bottle with its contents in the foundation-stone, and spreading the mortar, when another stone was placed upon the whole, which received, as usual, three strokes of the hammer, from the reverend gentleman.

"The Rev. H. Miles, of Granby, formerly of Montreal, then offered up a most appropriate prayer, in which he very fervently solicited the Divine blessing on our beloved queen, and her representative the governor-general of the colony.

"The Rev. J. J. Carruthers then delivered an address, of which the following formed a part:—

"Christian brethren, friends, and fellow-citizens,—On an occasion like the present, it is meet that we who are more immediately identified with the present undertaking, should explicitly avow our confidence in the distinctive peculiarities of the Christian faith, in the supreme divinity, the real humanity, the perfect obedience, the vicarious atonement, the prevailing intercession, the unsearchable riches, the universal sovereignty of Christ the Son of God and the Saviour of the world; in the existence, personality and agency of the Holy Spirit; in the justification of the sinful and guilty, by faith in the record which God has given of his Son; and in the necessity of personal holiness, as the natural effect and required evidence of a good hope through grace. These great principles we most surely believe; we deem them essential to Christianity, and can hold no religious fellowship with those who deny or who reject them. We maintain the plenary inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, their sole sufficiency for Christians individually, and for the church of Christ at large, in all that relates either to faith or practice, and utterly repudiate the decisions of human wisdom, although it be the wisdom of the ancients, and the requisitions of human authority, as in any degree binding on the conscience. We are Protestants; and, without the slightest reservation, assert the sacred right of every man to read in his own tongue the wonderful works of God, and to think, feel and act, in matters purely religious, as accountable to Him alone who claims as his own prerogative, the jurisdiction of the human soul. We venerate *antiquity*; but in our estimation, age adds nothing to the claims of superstition, and affords no sanctions to what was originally wrong. *We venerate antiquity, but it is the antiquity of truth* more ancient than the world itself, having her dwelling-place in the bosom of Deity, uttering her merciful announcements amidst the bowers of Eden, mingling her still small voice with the thunders and the tempest of Sinai; appearing in her own proper form in Nazareth, in Bethlehem, in Jerusalem, in the garden of Gethsemane, on the cross of Calvary; and then at Bethany, commanding her chosen servants to circulate far and wide her heavenly instructions, so that her sound might go through all the earth, and her words to the end of the world.

"We honour 'the powers that be' as ordained of God, but by him also limited in their jurisdiction, to the temporal wants and well-being of society; incapable of giving any additional sanction to the decisions of Divine wisdom and the dictates of Divine authority; having no power and no right to prescribe or enforce laws for the government of thought, the regulation of the heart's affections, of worship to God, or of charity to men. Within these well-defined limits—which they have never with impunity transgressed, civil rulers have ever received from that body of Christians with which we are associated, and of which we form a part, the honour and reverence and conscientious obedience which are their due.

"We have never been, and by the grace of God, we never shall be, the abettors of seditions;—we shall not speak evil of dignities; and in return for our devoted loyalty to the government under which we live, our peaceful recognition of its claims to respect and tribute and constitutional support, we only ask the continuance of what we now happily enjoy, exemption from insult and oppression—liberty to

worship God according to the dictates of our conscience—and the maintenance of civil equality amongst all who sustain, as subjects, the same relation to the throne, and are therefore all equally entitled to the protection of the state. We hold as Congregational Christians no principles which do not admit of the freest, fullest fellowship with all of every other denomination who embrace the fundamental principles of our common Christianity, and utterly repudiate as directly hostile to the spirit of our holy religion, and the precepts of its Divine Author, any terms of communion that would fetter the practical exercise of Christian charity, erect the Shibboleth of a party as the standard of personal religion, or render the entrance into the church of Christ narrower than the gate of heaven. We recognise the duty and privilege of aiding individually and collectively, in the work specially committed to the Christian church, of fulfilling the valedictory commission of our Lord, and spreading the leaven of true religion throughout the mass of the world's population.

"Our heart's desire and prayer to God is, that within the precincts of this sanctuary, now prospectively devoted to the service of God, many a heart, hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, may melt in penitential contrition,—that here many a publican may smite upon his breast,—that here many a prodigal, returned from his wanderings, may receive a Father's blessing. Confiding in the promises of Divine truth and mercy, we trust that the infant church which will soon worship on this spot, will enjoy, in richest plenitude, the precious influences of the Holy Spirit,—that peace and purity and love will here prevail—and that walking in the fear of God, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, they will be multiplied.

"And now, O thou King of Zion! Head of thy church, and Heir of all things! look down from heaven, and visit this spot, and the house here to be erected to thy glory. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children; and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands upon us,—yea, the work of our hands establish thou it!"

The Rev. J. Drummond, of Brockville, then pronounced the apostolic benediction, and the assembly dispersed.

TRANSACTIONS OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.—Adjourned meeting of the Thirteenth Annual Assembly, appointed to be held at Leeds in October next.

The arrangements for this important meeting are not yet completed, but they have advanced so far as to admit of the following announcement:—

The days appointed for the proceedings are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 10th, 11th, and 12th, of October.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 10th, the sermon will be preached by the Rev. Thomas Binney, of Weigh-House Chapel, London.

On the evening of Wednesday, the 11th, a public meeting of the Union will be held; and on the evening of Thursday, the 12th, a public meeting in aid of British missions.

The forenoons of Wednesday and Thursday will be devoted to meetings of conference for delegates and other brethren. The chair to be occupied by the Rev. J. Reynolds, of Romsey, chairman of the annual assembly. Among the subjects intended for discussion in these meetings, the all-important topic of general education will occupy a prominent place.

All brethren intending to be present at these meetings, and desiring accommodation during the visit, are requested to give timely notice of their intention to the Rev. R. W. Hamilton; the latest day on which these intimations can be received, will be Saturday, the 7th of October. The friends at Leeds cannot hold themselves responsible for the accommodation of any whose letter of announcement is not received on or before that day.

THE DORSET COUNTY ASSOCIATION was organised at Wareham, September 9th, 1795. Ten county ministers were present at its formation. Its income in 1801, was £83. 16s. 9d. Its leading object, from its first formation to the present time, has been to aid weak churches, and to extend the Gospel to the neglected parts of Dorsetshire. The amount of good effected through the instrumentality of this association, during the last forty-eight years, can never be determined till the day of final account. The following statistics will enable the reader to form his own opinion of the present state of the association, and the united churches and missionary stations. It at present embraces twenty-nine churches, containing 2070 communicants, and having connected with them, inclusive of the members, 9599 persons; and also fifty-eight village stations, in which the average hearers are 4803; so that the total number of persons connected with the Dorset County Association may be stated at 14,402. Six feeble churches, having on an average about thirty members each, are assisted from the Association Fund. The Dorset Sunday School Union embraces 4523 children, and 512 teachers, of whom two-thirds are church members. The associated churches have contributed during the past year, to the London Missionary Society £480. 15s. 5d.; Home Missionary Society £147. 19s. 3d.; and the Dorset Association £150. 16s. 10d.—We are happy that this association has done so much towards their ecclesiastical statistics; an example which we trust will be followed by all the sister associations.

NEW CHAPELS OPENED OR COMMENCED.

FALFIELD, NEAR THORNBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—The opening of the new Independent chapel in this village took place on Wednesday, August 3rd; when the Rev. Thomas Haynes, of Bristol, preached in the morning, and the Rev. Dr. Henderson, of Highbury College, in the evening. The erection of this place of worship has been distinguished by the liberal and decided patronage of Earl Ducie and his lady, whose friendly feelings towards the principles of Independence deserve to be gratefully recorded. His lordship was a principal contributor to the erection,—provided a dinner for the ministers and visitors, (upwards of two hundred of whom were the partakers of his lordship's hospitality on the occasion,)—and the park was thrown open to the company in the afternoon of the day. The attendance at the services was unusually large, the earl and his family being among the auditors. The projected erection of school rooms, adjoining the chapel, will make provision for the daily instruction of the children of the villagers. The whole has been arranged under the direction of an excellent brother, the Rev. W. Dove, of Thornbury.

FORMATION OF A NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AT TAUNTON, SOMERSET.

THE church and congregation assembling in Paul's Chapel, Taunton, have been long known as among the largest and most influential in the West of England. At the first glance, it would appear deeply to be deplored that any differences should divide the strength and weaken the influence of such a community. Discussions, however, arose many months ago upon a question that involves a foundation-principle of Congregationalism; and, though they have now terminated in the formation of a second church, yet the whole affair appears to have been conducted in a spirit so eminently Christian, that we trust it will be for the extension of the Gospel in that populous town, and that it will be admonitory and profitable to our whole connexion. The occasion of this division is, we understand, the existence of the custom of giving *subscribers* to the chapel a concurrent power with the *members* of the church, by

which a *joint* committee of management is chosen composed of members and subscribers, who are elected for life. How this constitution of things is regarded by the brethren who have seceded, may be seen by the following letter, which was sent to the deacons of the church in January last, to be submitted to the church at large.

"To the members of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, assembling at Paul's Meeting, Taunton.

"Dated January 20th, 1843.

"Beloved Brethren,—We, the undersigned, who have been accustomed to enjoy fellowship with you in the Gospel, beg to lay before you, for special consideration, the views we entertain concerning the present state of our affairs as a religious community.

"It has long been a source of great uneasiness and regret to some who now take the liberty of addressing you, that the system of management maintained at Paul's Chapel is not known to the Word of God, which we all recognise as the warrant and law of every church, professedly 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.'

"We do not understand the grounds for an arrangement which has existed for the last fifty years, whereby the members of the church have been deprived of their right of managing, without partnership or control, the affairs of Christ's cause and sanctuary.

"We do not believe that a select committee, or a mixed assembly, composed of members and subscribers, have any warrant in revelation or in reason for meeting to decide on great and solemn questions connected with the maintenance of the Redeemer's kingdom. We think, dear brethren, that none but members of the church should have power to decide on the resignation of the departing pastor, or the acceptance of the coming one—that the order of Christ's house—the occupation of the pulpit—the ordinances of the sanctuary, and the finances of the cause, should be all vested in the men who have professed faith in our Lord Jesus, and have sworn allegiance to him. Those, and those only, who are in the kingdom should be entrusted with the concerns of the kingdom. The New Testament shows us (to refer but to two instances,) in the first and sixth chapters of the Acts, that the 'disciples' were to elect their spiritual guides, and the 'multitude' of the disciples were to 'look out,' from 'among' themselves the officers who were to have the charge of their temporal affairs. It appears to us, beloved brethren, after much consultation and prayer, that a committee is not known to the New Testament, that it is an usurpation of the deacon's office: that a church is competent to manage its own affairs, and is not a spiritual 'ward in Chancery;' that where two bodies are found in authority in one place, the church must over-rule the committee, in which case the latter is proved unnecessary and useless; or the committee must over-rule the church, in which case the former is proved a tyranny and a plague. We deem, too, the office of a committeeman as holden for life, and not dependent on the respect, affection, and confidence of the people, as a flagrant contradiction to the spirit and practice of a free constitution, and that no man should be placed in a situation for which there is no valid scriptural election—no discipline in case of offences—and no law.

"Our dear brethren will, we trust, consider these things at our earnest request. The practice too, of taking the votes of a mixed assembly on any great question affecting the interests of the church, we cannot but solemnly repudiate and condemn. On this plan of providing the executive for Christ's kingdom, the unconverted have a larger share in the management of its affairs than those who are truly godly—the 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,' can outweigh by their votes the principles and best hopes of its genuine subjects; and the greatest prodigate in the parish,

by becoming a subscriber at our place of worship, may obtain a right to come into our assembly as a counsellor, and to hold up his hand for the decision of any matter, however solemn and grave its character and future results. Upon these grounds, then, beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, we beg you to give your determined and devout efforts to the immediate abolition of the present system of management at Paul's Chapel. We do not wish in any way to wound or disturb your minds by the agitation of any question of a personal or party character, but we deem it our duty to Christ, and the great statute-book and charter of His kingdom. We deem it our duty to you as the people of God, and to ourselves, our families, and the 'generation' whom we are bound to 'serve,' to testify against an unscriptural order in the 'house' of our great Master, contrary, as we believe, to His will, our rights, and the general good. If you are led to see with us in this matter, and, walking by the guidance of the New Testament, determine at once, without hesitation or delay, to abolish the present system of rule, by a committee and mixed assembly, we shall feel it our duty, privilege and pleasure, to remain with you, and to spend our lives, as God shall give grace, in 'striving together' with you 'for the faith' of the Gospel; but if you feel either unable or unwilling to remove the evils of which we complain, we must, in all candour and affection, declare, that we shall then feel it our duty to retire from your communion, and to seek out some distant locality in the town, where we may endeavour, under Jehovah's blessing, to found a church, whose order, fellowship and rule may be in accordance with the blessed will of our Lord Jesus Christ. In such a case, beloved brethren and sisters, we shall secede from you, but without hostility; we shall choose our path—you will still pursue your own; and it will remain for us to labour separately as believers in a common Saviour, and servants of a common Master. That he may be glorified in you, and in us, and in all his people, is the prayer of

"Yours in the bonds of the Gospel."

Here follow the names of thirty-four members of the church.

Although we are not acquainted with all the proceedings, yet it appears that some legal difficulties were supposed to exist, and that the opinions of Mr. A. W. Kinglake and Mr. Romilly, two chancery barristers, were taken on the case: they advised that the present system of management is illegal, and that the alteration contended for in the memorial, if effected, would have been legal, and consistent with the trust-deeds of the chapel, and in perfect accordance with the declaration of faith, church order, and discipline published by the *Congregational Union of England and Wales*. The reluctance of the majority to effect the desired reform, led sixty-one members of the church to send to their brethren the following document, announcing their withdrawal from their communion:—

"Dated June 22nd, 1843.

"Beloved Brethren,—After a long-continued, painful, and we are grieved to say unsuccessful effort to induce you to act with us in the abolition of the unscriptural system of management now existing at Paul's Chapel, to which many of us specially called your serious and devout attention in our Memorial of the 20th of January last, and as you are '*unwilling*, although we believe not *unable*, to remove the evils of which we complain,' we are compelled, with much regret, yet under a sense of duty, to act upon the resolution expressed in the memorial, to leave your communion, for the purpose of associating together as a church, in accordance with the principles and precedents of the New Testament. As we have also the satisfaction of being supported in our views by the late distinguished divine, the Rev. Robert Hall, we subjoin an extract from his works, vol. iv., page 319:—

"'In every Christian congregation the church ought to be regarded as the principal

object, to which the auditory are but an appendage, and for a union with which it should be their highest ambition to become qualified.

“Congregations are the creatures of circumstances; churches the institutions of God: and, if we adhere to the maxims and examples of Scripture, and of primitive antiquity in all religious proceedings, their judgment will be first consulted, and their official character recognised.

“But in the economy of modern dissenters a growing tendency may be perceived to merge the church in the congregation, and to commit the management of most weighty matters to a body of subscribers in preference to the members; an innovation, should it generally prevail, productive of incalculable evils. Many of those who compose the auditors, in distinction from the church, may possess genuine piety; but while they persist in declining to make a public profession of Christ, it is scarcely possible for them to give proof of it; the greater part, it is no breach of candour to suppose, are men of the world; and surely it requires little penetration to perceive the danger which religion must sustain, by transferring the management of its concerns from persons decidedly religious, to those whose pretensions to interfere, are founded on pecuniary considerations. The presumptuous intermeddling of worldly, unsanctified spirits, with ecclesiastical concerns, has been the source of almost every error in doctrine, and enormity in practice, that has deformed the profession of Christianity from the time of Constantine to the present day; nor is Dissent of much importance except as far as it affords an antidote to this evil. The system which confounds the distinction between the church and the congregation, has long since been carried to perfection in the Presbyterian denomination, and we all know what preceded and what has followed that innovation,—the decay of piety, the destruction of discipline, a most melancholy departure, in a word, both in principle and practice, from genuine Christianity.’

“It now, therefore, only remains for us to tender our resignation, and this we do without cherishing in our hearts the least unkind feeling; on the contrary, we would offer the earnest and sincere prayer that you may be abundantly blessed with every spiritual blessing, and that thousands of souls may be brought, through grace, to the knowledge and faith of the Lord Jesus Christ within the walls of that sanctuary in which many of our fathers worshipped, and where many of us first received in our hearts, the words of eternal life. Brethren, ‘pray for us;’ and accept, in the same spirit of Christian sincerity and love in which it is presented, our last and affectionate farewell.

“Yours in the bonds of the Gospel.”

Here follow the names of the sixty-one members.

The brethren who thus retired first met for worship in some commodious rooms in the Crescent, but have since erected a temporary place of worship on part of an extensive freehold site they purchased for £1000, in North Street, a district of the town where there is no chapel, and in the midst of a large and increasing population.

Having obtained plans and specifications for a new chapel in the early English style, 67 by 43 feet in the clear,—Thursday, the 10th of August was fixed on for laying the foundation-stone of the intended edifice.

Prayer-meetings at seven, and at eleven o'clock in the morning of that day, were held, and found to be seasons of hallowed enjoyment by many.

The Honourable Mrs. Thompson, of Poundisford Park, who has been long known in Taunton as the friend of every benevolent and Christian enterprise, was requested to perform the ceremony of laying the first stone.

About 1000 persons had assembled on the ground, when the Rev. W. H. Heudebourg of Tiverton offered prayer, and the foundation-stone was lowered to its resting-place. Thomas Thompson, Esq., the senior treasurer of the Home Missionary Society, then,

on behalf of his excellent lady, addressed the assembled multitude. He congratulated them that the fears he had entertained that the secession from Paul's Chapel would weaken the interest there, had not been realised. The spirit of the documents he held in his hand—the affectionate letter of the new pastor of that people,—the resolutions of the seceders to conduct their proceedings with sincere Christian affection towards those from whom they had withdrawn—and the letters which had been read from ministers reluctantly and unavoidably absent, had banished every cause of uneasiness. The Rev. James Bennett, D.D. of London, then delivered a most interesting address on Christ the true foundation of human confidence.

In the evening of the same day, the members who had seceded from Paul's chapel were formed into a Christian church; after which, about 120 members of other societies united at the Lord's table with the newly-formed church. The Rev. Dr. Payne, theological tutor of the Western Academy, presided, and delivered a most affectionate, impressive, and faithful address to the church. Rev. T. O. Dobbin, LL.B., classical tutor of the Western Academy, and Rev. W. Oran addressed the spectators. The Rev. W. H. Heudebourck, of Tiverton, and Rev. W. O'Neill offered solemn prayer to God—and many ministers assisted in the distribution of the elements; thus ended a day of uninterrupted pleasure and satisfaction, and one of hallowed solemnity, and of great encouragement to the friends engaged in this very important work.

On the following evening, Dr. Bennett delivered an address on the testimony of the Fathers to Congregational principles.

The Rev. J. Bishop, of Bridgewater, preached at the temporary chapel on Lord's day, 13th August. It is gratifying to know, that whilst a new Sunday-school, including 240 children, has been formed in North-street, as well as a new congregation gathered, the school at Paul's Chapel has increased, and the congregation there is good.

ON Wednesday, August 16th, the foundation-stone of a New Independent Chapel, at Hershaw, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, was laid, in the presence of numerous spectators, by Charles Hindley, Esq. M.P. Two interesting and appropriate addresses were delivered on the occasion,—the first by Mr. Hindley, before the stone was laid; the second by the Rev. Dr. Matheson, one of the Secretaries of the Home Missionary Society, after the ceremony had taken place. The devotional exercises were conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Churchill, of Ditton; Edwards, of Kingston; and Stevens, of New Hampton. The Rev. Messrs. Schofield, of Chertsey; Kluht, of Twickenham; West, of Sunbury; Newbury, of Feltham; and Lord, of Walton, the Home Missionary Society's agent on this station, also took part in the interesting proceedings.

ORDINATIONS, REMOVALS, ETC.

On Friday, April 14th, the Rev. David Nimmo was ordained to the pastoral office over the church and congregation assembling for Divine worship in the Temperance Hall, Bolton. The Rev. J. Dyson, of Halshaw Moor, introduced the service by reading the Scriptures, and prayer. A discourse explanatory of a Christian church on Congregational principles, was delivered by the Rev. J. Griffin, of Manchester, who also asked the usual questions. The ordination prayer was offered by the Rev. J. Dyson. The charge to the minister was given by the Rev. S. Ellis, of Bolton. The sermon to the people was preached in the evening, in Duke's-Alley Chapel, by the Rev. J. Gwyther, of Manchester. This is a new church, raised by the town mission in Bolton.

On Thursday, June 1st, the ordination of the Rev. J. Apperly, of Blackburn College, took place at the Independent Chapel, Long Buckley, Northamptonshire, when the following ministers engaged in the service :—In the morning the Rev. G. Nettleship commenced the service by reading and prayer. The Rev. T. R. Barker, of Spring-Hill College, Birmingham, delivered the introductory discourse. The usual questions were proposed by the Rev. J. Davies, of Daventry, after which the Rev. B. Hobson, of Welford, offered the ordination prayer. The Rev. E. Jones, of Oxford, Mr. Apperly's pastor, delivered the charge, and the Rev. T. Evans, of Weedon, concluded with prayer. In the evening the service was commenced by the Rev. A. Burdett, Baptist. The Rev. T. East, of Birmingham, preached to the church and congregation; the Rev. T. Create, Baptist, concluded. Other ministers were present, and took part in the services. The congregations were large, and all seemed deeply interested.

Howdon-upon-Tyne is a small, but very populous town, between Newcastle and Shields, to which men of business have continually resorted for the purpose of "laying up goods," but which men about their Master's business seem to have neglected, so that the inhabitants, until recently, might justly complain, "no one careth for our souls." It is true, though there is no church in the place, there is one in the adjacent parish of Wallsend, from the pulpit of which opinions are taught which are not regarded as evangelical. Some few years ago, a "holy and beautiful house" of prayer was erected, and set apart for the worship of God by the Congregationalists, in which the sacred truths of the Gospel have been proclaimed, and pure and undefiled religion has found a "certain dwelling-place." A church was formed, a Sabbath-school instituted; and the people only wanted "a man of their choice," to complete their Christian organization. On Monday, June 5th, they saw an answer to their prayers, when the Rev. W. Jackson, from Rotherham College, was ordained to the office of a bishop, taking the oversight of them in the Lord. The "order of the day" was as follows; the Scriptures were read, and prayer offered by the Rev. W. Campbell, M.A. of Newcastle; the introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. J. Pattison, of Wem, (Mr. Jackson's pastor;) the questions were asked by the Rev. J. Ward; the ordination prayer was offered by the Rev. A. Reid; the charge to the minister was given by the Rev. W. H. Stowell, theological tutor of Rotherham College; the sermon to the people was preached by the Rev. A. Jack, of North Shields. The Rev. Messrs. Bowman, Adam, Robertson, Lawton, &c. took part in the service.

On Monday, the 7th of August, the Rev. John Harrison, of Rotherham College, was ordained to the pastorate of the Independent church assembling in Ebenezer Chapel, Heywood, Lancashire. The Rev. David Hewitt, of Rochdale, commenced the services, with reading the Scriptures and prayer; the Rev. Samuel Davidson, LL.D., Professor of Biblical Criticism, in the Lancashire Independent College, delivered the introductory discourse; the Rev. William Blackburn, of Bamford, proposed the usual questions, and received Mr. Harrison's confession of faith; the Rev. Richard Fletcher, of Manchester, offered the ordination prayer; after which the Rev. W. H. Stowell, Professor of Theology, Rotherham College, delivered the charge, from Col. iv. 17. In the evening, the Rev. John Ely, of Leeds, addressed the church and congregation from Zech. viii. 13,—“And ye shall be a blessing.” The Rev. W. Roseman, of Bury; E. Robinson, of Park; Thos. Briery, of Oldham; John Harrison, Ovendon; G. Baker, Middleton; also took part in the services.

The Rev. Thomas Roberts, of Brecon College, having accepted the unanimous invitation of the English Independent church, at Park-Street Chapel, Llanelly, Carmarthenshire, intends to commence his labours there, on the first Sabbath in September.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF POPERY IN IRELAND.

THE discussions in Parliament during the past session, on the state of our sister country, have clearly disclosed the fact, that the leading statesmen of both the great political parties, are willing to make the Romish priests of Ireland stipendiaries of the state, if the true Protestants of the empire will quietly submit to be taxed for that purpose. We were therefore happy to hear, at a special meeting of the Voluntary Church Society, held at Craven Chapel, London, Wednesday evening, August 16th, 1843, Sir C. E. Smith, Bart., the Rev. J. Burnet, and the Rev. G. Smith deprecate and denounce such a project; and we insert the resolution which was unanimously passed by that crowded assembly, that all our readers may reflect upon the evils of that expedient by which Whigs and Tories, who have a common interest in church patronage and preferment, intend, if practicable, to save the sinecure church of Ireland for their relatives and dependents—"That this meeting desires to express its deliberate opinion, that the religious people of these kingdoms never will, and never ought to consent to the establishment of the Roman Catholic church in Ireland, and therefore *calls upon all the friends* of evangelical truth and religious freedom to let the Government and Legislature know the nature and force of their apprehensions and determinations." We sincerely trust, that our readers will reflect upon this important subject, and be prepared to respond with mighty efficiency to this call, when the hour for speaking out shall come.

FUNERAL OF THE LATE REV. J. M. MACKENZIE.—The mortal remains of this admirable and much-lamented young minister, have been recovered from the deep. From the state of his dress it was concluded that he had retired to his berth before the Pegasus struck on the fatal rock, and that he had rushed to the deck with only part of his clothes on. His body was interred 11th August, in Bamborough church-yard, and laid by the side of the Rev. J. Robb, of Dunkeld, who lost his life by the wreck of the Forfarshire steamer. The following document confirms all that it was our mournful duty to say of him last month:—

At a special meeting of the committee of management of the Glasgow Theological Academy connected with the Congregational churches in Scotland, held in Edinburgh on Tuesday, the first of August, 1843, it was unanimously resolved:—

"That having assembled on the mournful occasion of the heavy loss the Institution has sustained by the sudden death, in deeply affecting circumstances, of the Rev. John Morell Mackenzie, one of the tutors, this committee desire, in affectionate remembrance of his worth, to record in their minutes their high admiration of the very great ability with which he discharged the duties of his office during the whole period of his connexion with the Academy,—bringing to this service the extraordinary powers of a richly-gifted mind, the varied resources of extensive learning and research, the brilliant accomplishments of refined taste, and the fervour of deep-toned piety,—by these endowments in singular combination, and by the uniform kindness and urbanity of his manner, securing for himself the affection of the students, the esteem of his brethren, and the thanks of the churches, repeatedly expressed at the annual meetings of the friends of this Institution, in grateful acknowledgment of his services.

"That, while they deeply deplore the distressing event by which this connexion has been terminated, so early and so unexpectedly, and the Academy has been deprived of the advantage hitherto enjoyed, and anticipated for many years to come,

from one whose distinguished qualifications were so highly estimated, they bow in humble submission to the sovereign will of the Lord, whose hand they acknowledge in this, to them, dark and painful visitation; and, contemplating the awful scene on board the Pegasus immediately preceding his dissolution, they rejoice to know that, by Divine grace, he was enabled to finish his course in a manner becoming the Gospel, enjoying the peace which passeth all understanding, amidst the shrieks and confusion of a frightful shipwreck, and labouring to the last, by prayer and exhortation, to bring others with himself, through 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life,' he had long acknowledged, to the 'glory, honour, and immortality' they are fully persuaded he now inherits.

"That they also desire to express their sincere condolence with the heavily-afflicted widow of their departed friend and brother, to commend her to the God of all grace and consolation, and to assure her of their tender Christian sympathy under the peculiarly severe bereavement she has been called to sustain; and they, therefore, request Dr. Wardlaw, Mr. Russell, and Mr. Cullen to convey to her, in such a manner as they deem proper, the sentiments of this meeting.

J. A. FULLARTON, *Chairman.*
G. D. CULLEN, } *Secretaries."*
DAVID RUSSELL, }

RECENT DEATH.

Died at Wendover, Bucks, March 15th, 1843, the Rev. THOMAS SKEEN, aged 75. His earlier years were devoted to secular pursuits; but he was occasionally engaged as a lay-preacher till November 19th, 1812, when he was ordained as pastor of the church of Christ assembling at Ebenezer Chapel, Hammersmith; Drs. Winter, Leifchild, and others engaging in the service. In 1819 he retired from London, and accepted the pastoral charge of a small congregation at Wendover, which had been collected by the labours of a Mr. Jones, who erected the chapel in 1812, and was the first pastor of the church there. Considerable success attended his efforts at Wendover for several years; but untoward circumstances occurred which depressed the church, till it was near extinction; when in 1839 he resigned his office, and was succeeded by the Rev. Henry Holmes, from the Western Academy, the present pastor. Mr. Skeen witnessed with great satisfaction the revival of the church and congregation under his youthful successor, which was some solace to him amidst severe domestic afflictions. His last days were marked by much peace in his own soul, but were greatly embittered by the conduct of some of his children. His last words, revealing the source of his personal sufferings, and of his diminished influence were, "*A rebellious House!*" The Rev. William Gunn, of Aylesbury, preached a funeral sermon at Wendover, on the occasion of his decease.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Favours have been received from the Rev. Messrs. T. O. Dobbin—G. Taylor—S. Ransom—J. H. Godwin—Thomas Haynes—C. Stovel—David Russell—J. Burder—W. Owen—Robert Chamberlain—D. Rees—J. Harrison—J. J. Wilson, and Mr. Pollard.

The communication from "One of his Students" will probably appear in our next.

The Editor must defer till next month an answer to Philo-Verulam, as he has not yet been able to command sufficient leisure to examine the manuscripts.